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Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations

Letter dated 13 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the statement of H.E. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, addressed to the Conference on Dialogue among Civilizations at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization headquarters in Paris on 5 April 2005 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, under item 44 of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) M. Javad **Zarif**

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

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Annex to the letter dated 13 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by His Excellency Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Before the Conference on Dialogue among Civilizations at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris, April 5, 2005

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

On the last overseas visit during my eight year tenure as President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, it gives me delight to be hosted by UNESCO, the intellectual watch tower of the United Nations. The preamble of the constitution of this home base of educational, scientific and cultural activity states:

"since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed; ... ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war; ... a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must there-fore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind."

This quoted passage sums up the gist of my proposal to the international community for the advancement of dialogue among civilizations. Hence the choice of this organization on my last visit abroad is justified by a convergence in our aims and objectives. Before starting my discussion of the topic at hand, I would like to seize the moment and thank H.E. Mr. Director General of UNESCO, who so kindly offered me this opportunity.

Within the UN family, UNESCO has been the leading agency in the advancement of dialogue among civilizations, and it has over the course of the past few years held several significant gatherings on this topic with the support of its member countries all over the globe.

In the meantime, UNESCO has addressed two other important issues that on a conceptual level are deeply linked to dialogue among civilizations. One has been the ratification in 2003 of the Resolution on Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the

other has been the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity issued in 2001. A draft document based on this declaration is further passing through final stages of ratification at UNESCO. The particular enthusiasm that several countries and their leaders, especially President Chirac, have manifested toward this topic is most encouraging. President Chirac's profound remarks at the opening of the 31st session of UNESCO's General Conference in October 2001 stand out as an unforgettable document of this organization. Under the leadership of President Bouteflika, Algeria has been the first signatory to the resolution on cultural heritage, and this is the second time that we are both present at a UNESCO meeting on dialogue among civilizations. The first one was held in New York in the year 2000, where eleven other heads of state also attended.

UNESCO's commitment to ethical questions in science and bioethics also demonstrates that at the outset of the twenty first century the international community is seeking to fill the gap that was not sufficiently taken into consideration in past years.

Mr. Director-General,

Your decision to designate dialogue among civilizations as an inter-sectoral and strategic goal of UNESCO and taking it into account for considerations of strategic planning clearly indicates that this topic is at some level germane to all significant issues addressed by your organization.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The coincidence of the year 2001, the UN Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, with the reprehensible catastrophe that occurred on September 11th of that year, and the political and other consequences that globally ensued, together with the interest shown by several think-tanks and research centers as well as international political bodies to the question of dialogue among civilizations should alert us to the urgency of this issue, not only as a matter of theoretical debate and practical academic consideration, but also in the fields of politics and economics.

I would like to announce here that, relying on the objectives stated in the constitution of UNESCO, I have decided to dedicate my time and efforts after my presidency tenure, to the pursuit of this highly important goal. I have already considered the idea of establishing a non-governmental organization that welcomes the support of dignitaries, intellectuals, reformers, as well as appropriate international organizations. I would, in particular, value suggestions from you, participants in this memorable gathering, and I would welcome your comments within the confines of available time during this visit. In my opinion we should pay particular attention to pathologies of "dialogue culture" at the outset.

Esteemed participants,

What is actually meant by calling cultures and civilizations to engage in a dialogue? Is it not the case that civilizations and cultures have already been engaged in a dialogue? Is there anything new in our call? It is likely that most of the participants here are familiar with Arnold Toynbee's parable that likened civilization to contagious disease. Generally, the diffusion of civilization from one geographical location to another is so obvious that it hardly needs any arguments to support it. This contagion or diffusion is an ancient phenomenon, as old as any form of human civilization known to us. Obviously one cannot lay any claim to novelty, at the dawn of the third millennium of the Common Era, for calling to a practice that has thousands of years of precedent even before the advent of our common dating convention. Therefore, I should draw your attention to the fact that dialogue among civilization, in the sense that I use it, is not simply a matter of "diffusion," "borrowing," or "influence" that occurs among civilizations.

"Influence" does not always take place within the realm of human consciousness or self-consciousness. Of course one could consciously try to influence or be conscious of one's being influenced, but the element of consciousness or self-consciousness need not always be present in the process. By contrast, it is impossible to conceive of dialogue in unconsciousness or a state of non-self-consciousness.

Should we recognize "will power" as characteristic of human existence, and note that will power follows human knowledge, we can infer that one of the most decisive questions about human existence has to deal with the nature of human self-knowledge and knowledge about the universe. Immanuel Kant formulated his three fundamental questions in this very same regard.

Human knowledge is expressed in linguistic form, and language, with words as its building blocks, is inherently a social institution and not just a private matter. Words carry their history, the history through which they have grown, been transformed and eventually evolved into their present form. Therefore, any discourse, even if it is not a verbatim reproduction of previous discourses and may detract from them, it still rises from their bosom and communicates with them, and it will soon join the current of old discourses that will continue to flow and renew into the future.

Since language is a social phenomenon, every discourse can only acquire "meaning" and become intellectually perceptible in reference to a set of other discourses. Although there may be no physiological difference in perceiving the sound of raindrops falling or of doves signing and hearing the voice of a fellow human being, from a humanistic point of view, the comparison is moot. The sound of falling raindrops is indeed cumulative but they lack "consonance." This is because that sound does not emanate from conscious social will. They do not

constitute a language. It is only in language that ontology, epistemology and history come together and form a unified whole. Human existence and human knowledge about self-existence and about the existence of others, in the present and in the past, is expressed in language: and the essence of language lies in its communicative capacity. It is only in communication, in dialogue, that self-knowledge and knowledge about others and about history and the universe at large may be attained.

Moreover, dialogue is an ethical act. By drawing special attention to this ethical aspect here, I wish to emphasize the non-utilitarian characteristic of ethical acts. Without due emphasis on this non-utilitarian characteristic, any utility-seeking act may easily be labeled as ethical as well.

To enter the realm of ethics is indeed to enter the realm of humanity. Utility can only be "good" as far as it does not come into conflict with truth, beauty and ethics. Once again we realize that one of the most beautiful voices that comes through is that of Plato, who expressed, at a high point in history, the unison of truth, beauty, and ethics, in the most philosophical language and yet with most poetical words. Dialogue is all at one and the same time, a matter of aesthetics, and ethics and it embodies the truth.

Dialogue among civilizations also takes alarm at the diminishing and declining familiarity of recent and upcoming generations with the sources from which thought, culture, poetry and beauty have sprung in our world. Indeed, what kind of life is it that is devoid of Buddhist smile, of Christian love, of Mosaic compassion for the oppressed, of Zoroastrian fire and water, and of the magnificence of Quranic expression? What a bleak life that is denuded of heavenly music of Pythagoras, of Platonic ideal forms, of Aristotelian logic, politics, and metaphysics, of Plotinus's all-pervasive insight, of the divine wisdom propounded by Farabi, Avicenna and Averroes; where Suhravardi's illuminationist intuition is absent, the sacred folly and unique wisdom of the Greeks is lacking; where there is no sign to be found of the stormy sea of Persian mystical poetry, or of the silken softness of Arabic lyrics, or of the whiteness of cherry blossoms and Japanese Hai Kus; where the beautiful and beauty-seeking heart of Ibn al-Arabi and Meister Eckhart, and the restless nights of the romanticists and the enlightened age of 18th century thinkers remain unknown. Indeed, without Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Pascal, Kierkegaard, and Bergson, and without the perennial music of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, and more generally without paintings, music, sculpture, theater, poetry and other aesthetic products of human perceptiveness and culture what would life turn out to be like?

As a Muslim I believe that the beauty of religion derives from the beauty of justice, and not the other way round. It is justice that lies at the root of all

heavenly religions and therefore any interpretation of religion that results in injustice is contrary to the true teachings of religion. It should be the ideal of justice that sets the tone for religiosity not the other way round.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our true enemy that has come too close to us is ignorance of the history and culture of various civilizations. Dialogue among civilizations calls for augmenting the presence and role of cultural and ethical considerations in politics. We should recall that some observers have noticed that since the 18th century the world of politics has become increasingly more soulless and dull. When politics is rendered ancillary to economic scruples, it can no longer remain faithful to ethical virtues or to safeguarding human dignity: it can no longer watch out primarily for cultural and artistic heritage of humanity. Politics stripped of ethics and aesthetics can never accomplish much to protect human rights, no matter how much it may pretend to do so. Truth, beauty and ethics are bulwarks of human rights, and no human right can ever be defended by appeal to tyranny, untruth and unseemly contempt for dissenters. Let it be that intellectuals and artists take the lead in the journey to attain human rights, and let the politicians follow their lead.

The political characteristic of dialogue among civilization is that it adheres to the primacy of cultural and ethical concerns over political ones. In other words, it asserts that the understanding and practice of politics should be conducted under the aegis of cultural and ethical concerns. When politics merely follows the smell of oil instead of the scent of ethics, it may not defend human rights: rather it will only defend the rights of not humans but of wolves.

When it comes to politics, dialogue among civilizations would entail fundamental discussions of such concepts as democracy, justice and peace. By way of such discussions we may arrive at mutually acceptable definitions of these concepts, and only then we can avoid the pitfall of taking for granted self-interested interpretations that have simply constructed around the axis of power and dominance.

Allow me to say that I concur with the view expressed by the late German philosopher Georg Gadamer who, from a methodological as well as an epistemological perspective, maintained an essential difference between processes of dialogue and negotiation. In a dialogue, questions take priority over answers, and there is no insistence on silencing the opponent by way of aggrandizing the other party's shortcomings. On the other hand, this is normative in negotiations. In a dialogue we follow the process, but in negotiations we try to drag the process where we intend. In dialogue we remain open to change, whereas in negotiation the desire to prevail comes first.

Dear participants,

The resolution produced at the 31st General Conference of UNESCO which addresses the issue of terrorism is an important document that not only condemns this reprehensible and unjustifiable phenomenon in emphatic terms, but goes further to recommend an in-depth study of factors that lead to it. Dialogue as a form of communication in and of itself precludes aggression and terror. Aggression is uncommunicative and mute by its very nature, and as such is incapable of responding to any logic but that of brute force, and it leaves no room for mutual understanding. Proponents of aggression only seek to coerce others into seeing things the way they do, and forcing others to serve their interests, no matter how fundamentally their mutual interests may be contradictory. The result of this exclusionary procedure can only be the escalation of hatred and terrorism on the one side and war and carnage on the other. In addition to form, the content and substance of dialogue among civilizations also negates war and terrorism, and focuses instead on seeking remedies for a long list of ailments that afflict human society all over the globe: widespread poverty, and the shocking starvation of numerous children and adults, the horrendous destruction of the environment, the threatening of the fabric of family life, immorality, lack of education for the youth in poor regions, are among issues that would have to be put high on the list of our priorities to combat. Most similar concerns were on the minds of peace-loving statesmen who founded UNESCO.

In my recent visit to Africa, I came realize, more than before, the urgency of what in this organization is referred to as "Priority Africa." Especially in view of the inspiring fact that the civil society in this oppressed continent is positively progressing toward democracy and reform through avoidance of aggressive measures. These developments over the course of only fifteen years since my last visit to that continent are most striking. Similar indications of the same social ambitions are apparent in many other member states of UNESCO.

Dear friends,

At the end allow me to express my gratitude to the leaders of UNESCO and to renew our intense commitment, as member nations, to upholding and realizing the goals and ideals that define the existence philosophy of this organization.

Thank you

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Sixtieth session
Items 125 and 131 of the preliminary list*

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Joint Inspection Unit

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the harmonization of the conditions of travel throughout the United Nations system

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Harmonization of the conditions of travel throughout the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/2004/10).

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

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JIU/REP/2004/10
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HARMONIZATION OF THE CONDITIONS OF TRAVEL THROUGHOUT THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Prepared by

Ion Gorita

Joint Inspection Unit

Geneva
2004

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ACRONYMS

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination (now CEB)
CCAQ	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions
CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CPC	Committee for Programme and Coordination
DSA	Daily subsistence allowance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
LDC	Least developed country
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services (United Nations)
ORB	Occasional recuperation break
SOA	Special operational area
SOLAR	Special operations living allowance rate
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective: To conduct a comparative analysis of various elements of travel – categories, class and means of travel, stopovers, subsistence allowances, terminal expenses, lump sum option – of officials travelling at the expense of the United Nations, and propose measures aimed at harmonizing travel policies and practices throughout the organizations of the United Nations system.

In its previous report on "Travel in the United Nations" (JIU/REP/95/10, A/50/692), the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) drew attention to the differences in conditions of travel among the organizations of the United Nations system and cautioned "against increasing further the already existing disparity in travel standards between the United Nations and other organizations in the United Nations system" (para. 135). The report further observed that "[a]lthough travel entitlements are not part of the common system of salaries and allowances, they are part of the conditions of service; thus further widening disparities in treatment of travellers would certainly further weaken the common system, which should definitely be avoided." (para. 175).

Since the presentation of the above-mentioned report in 1996, the organizations of the United Nations system have continued to attach importance to travel issues. New travel policies have been adopted and enforced aimed at improving travel conditions, adapting existing policies to the rapid and drastic changes in the travel industry and their negative impact on the quality of travel, and streamlining administrative procedures. Through inter-agency consultations and coordination mechanisms, many of the new travel practices are being shared among the organizations with the objective of achieving an increased degree of harmonization in the conditions of travel throughout the United Nations system. Notwithstanding the above, the report addresses elements of travel where disparities still exist among the organizations of the common system – such as class of air travel and lump sum option, among others – and proposes possible action with a view to further improving the harmonization of travel policies and practices. For this purpose, the Inspector has formulated the following recommendations:

Chapter I. B – Class of travel

Recommendation 1

The General Assembly should mandate the Secretary-General to review, within the framework of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the criteria used to determine the class of travel of staff members, with a view to adopting a common policy at the United Nations system level in particular with regard to the minimum travel time for entitlement to business class. CEB should take into account the recommendation of the International Civil Service Commission contained in its annual report of 1997. [1]

Among other factors to be taken into account are the drastic changes in the airline industry in recent years and the resulting deterioration of travel conditions, the increase in travel time as a consequence of tightened security and the opinion of the United Nations Medical Service on the health risks of long haul air travel and measures to minimize them (including the possibility of establishing a threshold by age for entitlement to business class).

[1] A/52/30 "Report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 1997", para. 275.

In addition, as a rule, only the heads of the organizations should travel first class and travel entitlements of high-ranking officials should align to business class in order to achieve greater uniformity (paras. 23 - 30).

Chapter I. D – Lump sum option for travel

Recommendation 2

The executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system which have not yet done so, namely the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), should extend the lump sum option to family visit and education travel.

The Secretary-General, within the existing inter-agency coordination mechanisms, should examine the benefits of extending the lump sum approach to other categories of travel (on appointment, change of duty station, separation and interviews) taking into account the experience of other organizations already applying it. In this regard, the Inspector supports the recommendation of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations, Action 25(a), to apply the payment of a lump sum for repatriation travel (paras. 52, 53 and 61).

Recommendation 3

The executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system paying a lump sum amount for home leave, family visit and education travel should use as a benchmark 75 per cent of the full economy fare (the International Air Transport Association (IATA) published fare, by most direct route) (paras. 55 - 60).

Recommendation 4

The executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system which have not yet done so, namely the United Nations, the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), WIPO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), WHO, ITU and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), should discontinue the existing provisions requiring evidence of travel under the lump sum option, in line with the recommendation of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations, Action 25(a). Instead, travellers' self-certification, along with an adequate audit process (through random checks of supporting documentation to be kept by the staff members), should be implemented (paras. 62 - 63).

Chapter I.B. Exceptions to the approved standard of travel

Recommendation 5

The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to discontinue the practice of reporting exceptions to the approved class of travel. Existing related internal control mechanisms should remain in place. Clear criteria should be established for exceptions, particularly for upgrading travel to first class for reasons of eminency and on medical grounds. The General Assembly should legislate on the standard of accommodation applicable to the

Deputy Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the personal aides/security officers travelling with the Secretary-General so as to discontinue the repeated treatment of these cases as exceptions (paras. 33 - 36).

Chapter I. C. Travel by other means of transportation

Recommendation 6

The executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations common system should enforce the use of alternative modes of transportation when more cost-effective in the interest of the organizations. Relevant rules and provisions should be modified as applicable in each case (paras. 37 - 43).

Recommendation 7

The use of rented cars should be regulated (para. 44).

Recommendation 8

In the interest of streamlining procedures for reimbursement of travel by private car, the Secretary-General should review the current mileage system with a view to replacing it by a standard rate to be applied worldwide by the organizations of the United Nations system (paras. 45 - 48).

Chapter I. F. Daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses

Recommendation 9

The executive heads of the organizations which do not pay full advance of subsistence and/or terminal expenses (ILO, WHO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, ICAO, UPU and IMO) should introduce this best practice currently in place in various organizations of the system in order to reduce workload for processing of travel claims. Organizations should seek to automate (online) the processing of travel claims (paras. 68 - 71).

Chapter I. E. Stopovers

Recommendation 10

The executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system where staff members travel business class should increase the threshold for the granting of stopovers for rest purposes from 10 to 16 hours. Conversely, staff members not travelling in business class should be entitled to have a stopover after a 10-hour journey (paras. 64 - 67).

Chapter I. A. Categories of travel

Recommendation 11

The executive heads of the respective United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so, should adopt provisions based on best practices with regard to reverse education travel, travel of breastfeeding mothers, travel of single parents, possibility of choosing an alternative

place of home leave taking into account the nationality of the spouse, and the minimum number of days to be spent in the country of home leave (paras. 11 - 14).

Chapter II. Travel of members of organs and subsidiary organs

Recommendation 12

The General Assembly may wish to request the Secretary-General to initiate, in the framework of CEB, a review of the standards of travel and entitlements for members of various organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations and organizations in the United Nations system, with a view to formulating proposals for harmonizing these standards at the United Nations system level (paras. 72 - 75).

-.-.-

This report has dealt with the standards of travel, as they exist in the United Nations system today. With the introduction, in the not too distant future, of results-based budgeting and management in the Secretariats of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, the current rules and regulations covering travel standards will have to be reviewed. Such a review must be carried out with a view to adapting the relevant rules and regulations to the requirements of managers so as to help them achieve expected results.

Introduction

1. Travel is an important component of the United Nations' activities. Travel – whether to participate in a conference or meeting, monitor programme implementation, provide advice, training or assistance - is a means for the organizations of the system to fulfil their mandates. As travel expenditures represent a relatively high share of the overall resources of organizations, managers, Member States and oversight bodies of the organizations of the common system have constantly attached great importance to achieving efficiency and cost savings in travel. Although this is still the primary consideration today, conditions of travel are also important to ensure the protection of the health and safety of travelling staff as well as their capacity to perform their duties effectively. This is even more relevant today, as travel conditions have deteriorated over the last few years, whereas the demands placed on organizations for efficient delivery have increased. Finding a balance between these two aspects is not an easy task, the more so given that there are important discrepancies in rules and conditions of travel among the organizations of the system.

2. The present report is the ninth in a series of Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) reports on travel in the United Nations.[2] The previous reports examined the budgetary and efficiency aspects of travel in general or within a specific organization. This report focuses on travel entitlements and conditions of travel. It examines and evaluates policies and practices of different organizations, highlighting good practices and identifying possible improvements, with a view to expanding them throughout the system, achieving where possible a certain degree of harmonization and higher level of efficiency in travel. The report was included in the Programme of Work of the Unit at the request of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Office of Central Support Services of the United Nations Secretariat also expressed interest in this subject.

3. There are different categories of official travel in the United Nations. The present JIU review will cover the following categories of travel: travel on official business, travel on appointment, travel on separation, travel on change of duty station, home leave travel, family visit travel and education travel. The two main groups of travellers covered in this report are staff members and their dependants and the members of organs and subsidiary organs. Combined, they account for the bulk of travel resources of the organizations.

4. The JIU analysis includes the 14 organizations of the United Nations system that responded to the request for information (see annex 1) and is based on the existing rules and procedures for travel in these organizations, as well as on information gathered from officials during the interviews and consultations held in the headquarters of the organizations. A field visit to Cairo, where eight regional offices and more than 20 organizations of the system are located, was organized with the purpose of appraising travel conditions and practices from the field perspective.

5. The Inspector considered the possibility of extending the JIU survey to Governments and the private sector. However, previous experience showed that a comparison proved to be difficult due to the diversity of practices and travel patterns.[3] The Inspector did however explore the practices of one other organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and two private sector companies (IBM Switzerland and Nestlé) with the intention of benchmarking for best practices.

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[2] A/8900 of 24 November 1972 (JIU/REP/72/4) "The use of travel funds in the United Nations"; EB 5546 Add.1 (JIU/REP/74/3) "Report on the use of travel funds in the World Health Organization"; CL.66/15 of 9-20 June 1975 (JIU/REP/75/1) "Report on the use of travel funds in the Food and Agricultural Organization"; 100 EX/7 of 20 August 1976 (JIU/REP/76/2) "Report on the use of travel funds in UNESCO"; A/32/272 (JIU/REP/77/3) "Report on first-class travel in the United Nations organizations"; A/37/57 of July 1982 (JIU/REP/82/7) "Organization and methods for official travel"; A/41/121 of 6 October 1986 (JIU/REP/85/13) "Follow-up report on organizations and methods for official travel"; and A/50/692 of 31 October 1995 (JIU/REP/95/10) "Travel in the United Nations: issues of efficiency and cost savings".

[3] A/C.5/48/83 of 29 July 1994, paras. 14-20.

6. The opinion of the Joint Medical Service of the United Nations system was also sought on the issues of the implications for health of long-haul travel and the granting of exceptions to existing travel standards for medical reasons.

7. In undertaking this review, the Inspector was aware of the complexity of the subject and the differences in practices among the organizations of the system, which render difficult any attempt to achieve uniformity. In fact, this is not the first attempt at harmonizing travel practices within the United Nations common system. Since 1952, the former Administrative Committee on Coordination/Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (ACC/CCAQ) has been concerned with uniformity of the conditions of travel of the organizations of the system. Other subsidiary and expert bodies, such as the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and JIU have considered the issue on various occasions. The last time the issue was considered, in 1997, the General Assembly requested ICSC to review the question of travel entitlements and, having taken note of the observations made, invited the Commission "to continue its consideration of this matter".[4] The following year, CCAQ requested ICSC to delay consideration of this matter until such time as the necessary research had been carried out.[5] Since then, to our knowledge, no other research has been undertaken. In preparing this report, account has been taken of the prior reports and views of these bodies.

8. Drastic changes in the travel industry in recent years resulting from the deregulation of the market and increased security and health concerns, have led to the deterioration of travel conditions to such a degree that this is now an issue of concern to all. In this context, organizations have had to modify, or apply with more flexibility, their existing travel rules and procedures in order to adapt to the new situation and minimize the negative impact on the travel conditions of the staff. The differences in travel practices among the organizations of the system have as a consequence become more apparent.

9. Some of the issues within the scope of this JIU report have been reviewed by the working group created under Action 25 of the Secretary-General's Reform[6] on "The Organization and its people: investing in excellence: Mechanisms and incentives to encourage mobility". A preliminary assessment made by this working group of the contractual arrangements and benefits offered to United Nations Secretariat staff in the field disclosed differences in entitlements, benefits packages and policy implementation between the Secretariat and the United Nations funds and programmes and among the different categories of personnel in various areas, including rest and recuperation schemes and travel procedures.[7] The review has now been completed and a number of recommendations made to harmonize practices.[8] Action on this report is still to be taken.

10. The Inspector would like to express his appreciation to the officials of the United Nations system, representatives of other organizations and of the private sector who cooperated in the preparation of this report. He would also like to underline the limitations imposed on the presentation of this report by the insufficient or lacking statistics and management reporting systems in some organizations, which made it impossible to produce a valid comparison based on coherent and consolidated data on travel expenditures, travel cost per staff, cost savings, cost implications, transaction costs, percentage of staff applying for a particular category of travel or option, etc.

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[4] General Assembly resolution 52/216 of 22 December 1997.
[5] ACC/1998/5 of 11 June 1998.
[6] A/51/950 of 14 July 1998.
[7] A/58/351 of 5 September 2003, para. 59.
[8] Report of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on Strengthening of the United Nations System, Action 25(a), Summary.

I. Travel of staff members

A. Categories of travel

11. The following categories of travel are common to most organizations of the United Nations system surveyed: travel on official business, travel on appointment, travel on separation, travel on change of duty station, home leave travel, family visit travel, education travel, travel for security reasons and medical evacuation travel (see annex 2). Some organizations may name them and/or group them differently in two broad categories: duty travel and statutory travel, or travel on mission and travel in application of entitlements, as is the case for example in the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UNESCO.

12. In some organizations, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and WMO, certain categories of travel, such as medical and security evacuation travel, do not officially exist because of the organizations' specific mandates and modes of operation. Others (such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), being highly field oriented, have put in place rest and recuperation/mental health travel schemes for staff members living in field locations in stressful, insecure and isolated conditions, or lacking basic essential commodities. The Inspector noted significant differences in the schemes adopted by these organizations. The most relevant one is the fact that at the United Nations Secretariat, pursuant to the terms and conditions of ST/AI/2000/21 on occasional recuperation break (ORB), only a five-working day special leave with pay in designated special missions or locations is granted and related travel costs are to be borne by staff members, whereas in other organizations, either travel arrangements are made and expenditures paid by the organizations, or a lump sum is allocated for such purposes. There are also differences in the determination of the special operational area (SOA) and special operations living allowance rate (SOLAR) among the beneficiaries of this scheme in the above-mentioned organizations.[9] However, since this issue falls under the scope of the review and recommendations put forward by the working group created under Action 25 of the Secretary-General's Reform[10] on "Mechanisms and incentives to encourage mobility", the Inspector will refrain from entering into further detail and recommendations while hoping that a decision be taken soon in this regard in the interest of protecting the health and well-being of staff in hazardous and difficult living conditions and encouraging their mobility. In fact, the report of the working group proposed among others that the Secretariat practice on issues such as SOA (except for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations) and ORB should be aligned with that of the funds and programmes.

13. A few organizations (such as the United Nations, WFP, FAO and WHO) have been enforcing gender mainstream adopting special provisions for the travel of breastfeeding mothers and UNICEF has gone further by extending them to single parents. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has introduced, on a pilot basis, the travel of domestic partners and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has also approved one case to date. In the United Nations, entitlements for travel of domestic partners are payable in certain circumstances.[11] This is a practice also existing at OECD.

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[9] A/AC.96/978, paras.131-133, "Report of the United Nations Board of Auditors on the Financial Statements of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 2002".
[10] A/51/950 of 14 July 1997.
[11] ST/SGB/2004/13 of 24 September 2004.

14. The Inspector also noted that a degree of flexibility is applied by some organizations in granting certain travel entitlements as, for instance, in the number of days required to be spent in the country of home leave (seven days or no minimum number instead of 14 days), in selecting the place of home leave travel (to a country where the staff member or their spouse has family or cultural ties, in alternate years), or the right of parents to reverse education travel to the place of study of the children (United Nations, UNDP, WFP, UNESCO, WHO).

See Recommendation 11

B. Class of Air Travel

15. The class of air travel is, of all the components of travel, the most complex one, and also one in which the Inspector registered major disparities among the organizations of the common system.

Background

16. For many years, conditions of travel in the United Nations have reflected changes in the airline industry. For instance, in 1961, after the introduction of jet flights, economy class was introduced at the United Nations for all travel of officials below a certain level on flights of nine hours or less and in 1982, after the introduction of business class by many airlines, the class immediately below first (business class) was recommended for journeys (or a leg of a trip) of a duration equal to that of crossing the North Atlantic.[12] Each time a new policy was recommended, differences in implementation would arise among the organizations of the system and attempts were made to correct them (see annex III).

17. Among these were the recommendation of a meeting of Medical Directors of the United Nations system that for health reasons all travel of five hours or more should be in business class,[13] the CCAQ decision that economy class was not an appropriate mode of travel on official business[14] and ICSC guidance about the reasonableness of considering an upgrade from economy to business class for flights of more than six hours or more.[15] These attempts rarely had the success expected and, although some progress has been registered in recent years, the situation has not evolved significantly so that divergences in class of travel among the organizations of the common system persist.

18. Furthermore, the deregulation of the travel market and the drastic cuts and restructuring imposed on major companies through competition from low-cost carriers, together with the impact of the events of 11 September 2001, the world economic slowdown and increased security and health concerns, have resulted in: a deterioration of the conditions of travel, particularly in economy class (overcrowded space, cramped seat position, poor quality of air); the cancelling of flights; and a reduction in the number of day-time scheduled flights, thus necessitating early departures and overnight trips. Increased safety requirements have brought about longer check-in times and delays in scheduled departure times and connecting flights, adding at least two to three hours to the already long travel time on transatlantic flights. Combined with this is the fact that United Nations officials are increasingly required to travel on weekends and depart/arrive at night with all the related implications for security and health.

19. Two distinct standards of accommodation are generally applicable for high-ranking officials and for other staff. Within these two broad categories, a variety of policies and practices exists, as discussed below.

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[12] ACC/1982/5, paras. 96-101.
[13] A/52/30 "Report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 1997", paras. 257 and 258.
[14] ACC/1990/10, paras. 71-77.
[15] A/52/30 "Report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 1997", para. 275(d)(i).

Standard of accommodation for high-ranking officials

20. The Executive Heads of all organizations travel first class, with the exception of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) where the five elected officials, including the Secretary-General, are granted business class.

21. In general, almost all organizations grant a higher standard of accommodation to their senior officials (Under-Secretary-General, Assistant Secretary-General, Deputy and Assistant Director-General, or equivalent) than to the rest of the staff. Five organizations (ICAO, ILO, IMO, WHO, World Bank) provide the same standard to senior officials as to the rest of the staff.

22. The predominant standard is the class immediately below first: seven organizations of the United Nations common system surveyed grant it regardless of the duration of the flight (United Nations, FAO, UNESCO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), IMO and the World Bank) and four others (the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), ICAO, ILO and WMO) link it to different thresholds. Three organizations maintained the first class standard, at WIPO regardless of the duration of the flight and at IAEA and WMO provided the flight exceeds seven or nine hours respectively (see annex 4). At the time of the CCAQ survey in 1992, one organization accorded first class without restrictions, six organizations granted a higher standard than business class with certain conditions and two organizations had a lower standard. Some progress has therefore been achieved since then.

Standard of accommodation for all other staff members

23. The standards of accommodation for air travel undertaken by staff members other than high-ranking officials (i.e. officials at D-2 level and below) vary greatly among the organizations of the system and this variation has increased over the years. The United Nations and its funds and programmes (with the exception of WFP) and 2 of the 12 specialized agencies surveyed (UNIDO and ITU) apply the lowest standard, i.e. economy class by the least costly airfare structure, except for flights of nine hours of more on official business, appointment, change of duty station and separation, where class immediately below first is granted (business class). UPU applies economy class for all official business and only in exceptional cases may business class be granted.

24. Most specialized agencies applied a higher standard (business class), particularly on official business travel, depending on the duration of the trip and/or the purpose of the travel and destination. Four organizations have business class as the standard for all categories of travel, except education travel; WIPO grants it regardless of the duration of the flight and ILO and WFP/FAO after five, and nine, hours of travel, respectively (see annex 5).

25. In 2000, WHO upgraded its standards for duty travel by lowering the threshold for business travel from nine to six hours. ICAO and UNESCO also upgraded their standards in 2003 and 2004, respectively, to the class immediately below first (business class), in ICAO for all official travel (official business travel, travel on appointment, change of duty station and separation) of more than seven hours and in UNESCO for travel on mission where the flight time is eight hours or more and for journeys between Paris and New York and Paris and Montreal. Conversely, ITU actually lowered its standards in 2002 by raising the threshold for business class from five to nine hours. However, officials interviewed were

cautious in anticipating any related substantial savings since most travel at ITU is within Europe and therefore less than nine hours in duration.[16]

26. The differences become more evident when comparing organizations sharing common premises and services, such as at the Vienna International Centre, where in IAEA business class is granted for flights above seven hours duration and in UNIDO and the United Nations Office at Vienna for flights exceeding nine hours. In addition, as pointed out by a previous JIU report,[17] judges of the International Court of Justice travel first class[18] while judges of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia as well as judges of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda[19] fly business class.

27. In granting a higher class of accommodation, the nine-hour threshold is critical for transatlantic flights between the United Nations secretariats and the United Nations funds and programmes in New York and Geneva. Other main European city pairs of the United Nations New York-based organizations, such as London and Paris, are basically transit hubs for the final destinations and the standard becomes business class since the total flying time exceeds nine hours.

28. Most European-based organizations have thresholds varying from five to eight hours (see annex 5), making all transatlantic flights automatically business class. The only specialized agency surveyed where the nine-hour rule could have a bearing on the standard of accommodation is FAO, although at FAO, for practical purposes, travel between Rome and New York is considered to be more than nine hours. This is also the case at WFP. For UNESCO, the Paris-New York and Paris-Montreal liaisons, although less than nine hours, have also been changed to business class. [20]

29. Some organizations have suggested the use of an intermediary class between business and economy class (e.g. Economy Plus, Premium or Deluxe Economy Class). However, this option appears to be available only from a restricted number of carriers and to limited destinations.

30. The Inspector sought the views of the Director of the United Nations Medical Service pursuant to a meeting of the Medical Directors of the common system in the early 1990s, which recommended for health reasons that all air travel of five hours or more should be in business class. The Director of the United Nations Medical Service explained that, after intensively reviewing related medical literature, it can be concluded that the risk that travellers may suffer deep vain thrombosis, back pain or dizziness, thus impairing their ability to work efficiently, are higher in economy class than in business or first class. These risks are higher after four to five hours of travel and increase significantly after eight hours of travel, and in travellers over 45 years old. Other symptoms such as pre-flight and in-flight stress, recuperation time from jet lag and related fatigue, disorientation and sleep disruption also increase with age. In general, women are at more risk, as are nationals of Northern Europe. Since the average age of the United Nations secretariat staff is 47 years, with a high representation of women, she concluded that the

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[16] The financial implications for ICAO of such change were estimated at US$150,000.

[17] JIU/REP/95/10, paras. 130-131.

[18] General Assembly Resolution 37/240 of 21 December 1982, Article 1, para. 2(a).

[19] A/49/7/Add.12, para. 8, A/52/520, Annex III, Article 1 and General Assembly Resolution 53/214, Section VVV, para. 5.

[20] A change in policy at the United Nations Secretariat and its funds and programmes was estimated by relevant officials, only for flights departing from New York to Geneva handled by American Express Company, at US$ 1.4 million, which represents about 3 per cent of the total travel volume and less than 0.1 per cent of the United Nations Secretariat approved budget appropriation for 2004-2005.

United Nations staff constitutes a population at risk. On the other hand, she pointed out that there is no major difference in terms of health risks between first class and business class travel.[21]

See Recommendation 1

Travel practices in the private sector and other organizations

31. Discussions with representatives of other international organizations and the private sector revealed an increased orientation towards pragmatism and simplification of travel policies and procedures. OECD, for instance, was modifying existing rules to facilitate more flexible travel arrangements and delegate full authority to managers to decide under which conditions staff members travel in order to maximize the net benefit of travel to the organization within the approved budget provisions. Also under the new rules, there will be no distinction in the standards of travel for high-ranking officials. At IBM Switzerland, travellers are called upon to make their own travel arrangements and are reimbursed in an amount equivalent to the most economical fare by air in economy class. At Nestlé, travel within Europe is in economy class and elsewhere is in business class. Expenses are settled by use of a business credit card.

32. However, the travel patterns of these organizations/companies are different to those of the United Nations and are therefore not comparable; travel is mostly within Europe on flights of short duration or within the country. At the United Nations, 35 preferred carriers and about 6,000 city pairs are involved in travel from New York alone.

Exceptions to the approved standard of travel

33. Exceptions to the approved standard of travel are in all organizations authorized at a high level of management. However, only the United Nations has a system of reporting exceptions to the legislative body, as requested by General Assembly decisions.[22] A summary of the exceptions granted at the United Nations over the last five years is presented in Annex 6 to this report. A review of these annual reports of the Secretary-General on standards of accommodation for air travel shows no steady trend or pattern, other than more exceptions are granted for first class travel than for business class. The main reasons for exceptions over the years have been medical conditions and travel of eminent persons. Other reasons are: regular standard not available, donating services free of charge to the organization, arduous journeys, travel of the Deputy Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and personal aide/security officers. Their number and cost fluctuated according to figures published in the last five years, reaching a peak in 2002, with 89 exceptions granted at a cost of US$ 183, 400, representing less than 1 per cent of total travel expenditures.

34. The Inspector noted that ACABQ has on more than one occasion[23] commented on the absence of specific requirements for granting exceptions under the different categories. It referred in particular to the need to establish clear criteria regarding eminency and questioned the grounds for granting exceptions on the basis of medical conditions. The Inspector also noted that the Secretariat, in an effort to streamline the procedures for granting exceptions, has developed a form (TTS.3) to be completed by staff members and has made it available through the United Nations Intranet. However, neither the form nor the relevant instructions provide the required definition of prominent and eminent persons. Further, in the absence of

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[21] "Medical Guidelines for Airline Travel", 2nd ed, Aviation, Space and Environmental Medicine, Vol. 74, No.5, Section II, Supplement May 2003. "Researcher says jet lag causes brain shrinkage, http://www.cnn.com/TRAVEL/NEWS, May 21, 2001, Posted 12:38 PM EDT.

[22] General Assembly decisions 44/442 of 21 December 1989 and 46/450 of 20 December 1991.

[23] A/56/630, para. 6 and A/49/952, paras. 17-19.

provisions concerning the standard of accommodation applied to the Deputy Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and personal aides/security officers, these cases are repeatedly treated as exceptions.

35. In the Inspector's view, instead of the current periodic reporting system on exceptions, it would be more efficient for the Secretariat to set up criteria to which managers and oversight services can refer for compliance. Moreover, although the General Assembly decided[24] in 1993 that this report should be presented on a biennial basis, the printing and distribution costs of such reports are still in the order of US$ 13,000.[25] In order to achieve further efficiency savings in the preparation, printing and distribution of reports and reducing the volume of documentation submitted to it, as requested by various resolutions,[26] the Inspector is of the opinion that the preparation of this report on exceptions to the standard of accommodation should be discontinued. Existing procedures for authorizing, costing and keeping track of exceptions should be maintained so as to be able to respond to queries of the auditors or Member States in this regard. The required criteria regarding eminency should be developed and efforts continued to limit exceptions on medical grounds to a review of the merit of each case, particularly for first class travel.

36. Other organizations reported a low level of exceptions to the approved standard of accommodation, with similar reasons being given and approval mechanisms applied. However, there is no tracking/reporting system in place in most cases and very few were able to provide the exact number of exceptions and costs. For the sake of transparency, it could be advisable to set up such controls and monitoring as needed, with due regard to their cost which, under no circumstances, should outweigh the purpose.

See Recommendation 5

C. Travel by other means of transportation

37. At most organizations examined, the normal mode of transportation for all official travel is by air, though some relevant rules and regulations at ICAO and IMO make no reference to a specific official mode of travel. In those organizations where rules provide for air travel as the official mode, it is indicated however that an alternative means may be approved in the interest of the organization, or at the request of the staff member. These alternative modes of travel are by sea, rail and road.

38. In general, the alternative modes are used at the request of staff members; there is no policy to enforce their use when more economical, i.e. in the interest of the organization. It is nevertheless stated that the total cost to the organization of using an alternative mode of transportation, particularly at the request of the staff members, should not exceed the cost and travel time of the most direct and economical route under arrangements made by the organization for air travel. Furthermore, when travel is undertaken by private car at the staff member's request, organizations do not accept responsibility for loss, injury or damage incurred during the journey and the traveller is responsible for making his/her own insurance arrangements.

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[24] General Assembly decision 57/589.

[25] E/AC.51/2003/L.3 - Current notional costs of documentation and meeting services; utilization of conference-servicing resources; 1 page = US$ 1,069.

[26] A/RES/50/206, paras. C.7-9; A/RES/58/126, paras. B.5-7.

Travel by sea

39. The majority of organizations do not specify in their rules and regulations a particular standard of accommodation for travel by sea. Those that do specify a particular standard (UNDP, FAO, WIPO) may grant a higher class depending on the grade of the traveller or the purpose of travel.

40. In fact, the JIU review confirmed that travel by sea has fallen into disuse. All but one of the organizations surveyed stated that they have not used this mode of travel for many years, and even then, it has involved travel by ferry combined with another means of transportation. The officials interviewed were however reluctant to abolish the relevant rule, which serves as a reference in those exceptional cases when the need may arise.

Travel by rail

41. The common standard of accommodation for rail travel is first class, including sleeper, as appropriate; some organizations make a distinction between single or double sleeper, depending on the traveller's grade.

42. This alternative mode of transportation tends to be used most frequently at the headquarters locations of some organizations, for particular itineraries such as New York-Washington or Geneva-Paris and is mostly at the staff member's request. A previous JIU report[27] pointed out that on certain routes, rail travel is more cost-effective than air travel, and preferred by travellers, and recommended that the United Nations Secretariat should advise on and encourage this alternative. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) also recommended[28] that at the United Nations, Staff Rule 107.9(b) establishing that the normal mode of travel is by air, should be reassessed and that decisions regarding mode of travel should be based on economy and efficiency criteria.

43. In the light of the variety of offers available and companies practising discount prices for both air and rail travel in a highly competitive market, the Inspector restates the need for organizations to put in place policies to enforce the use of trains when more cost-effective in the interest of the organization. At Nestlé Switzerland, for instance, travel to Milan and Paris is as a rule by train, except when the return trip is on the same day.

See Recommendation 6

Travel by road

44. There are two modalities of travel by road: travel by the staff member's private vehicle and travel by official vehicle. A third modality, rental of cars, is used in certain field operations. In peacekeeping missions it is frequently used, in particular for travel to remote bases in isolated areas. The United Nations Secretariat considers that regulations, rules and guidelines regarding car rental should be introduced (with regard, for example, to selection of car rental company, type of vehicle, accident insurance coverage, etc.).

See Recommendation 7

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[27] JIU/REP/95/10 "Travel in the United Nations: issues of efficiency and cost savings".
[28] OIOS report 0997/97 of 14 May 1997.

45. In the case of travel by official vehicle, full costs are covered by the organizations and the administrative process is quite expeditious. Some organizations have introduced procedures to simplify even further the handling of this type of travel such as the use of open monthly travel authorizations in the field or reimbursement of expenditures after completion of travel in lieu of advances. These practices, in the Inspector's view, should be encouraged.

46. Authorized travel by private vehicle at the request of the staff member is, on the other hand, quite a cumbersome procedure whereby the reimbursement of travel costs is calculated in accordance with specific mileage rates.[29] In the Inspector's opinion, the simplification of such a system should be looked into.

47. The Inspector noted that most organizations follow the approved United Nations rates which are based on established operating costs in the area of travel according to mileage shown on official road guides or on official published rates, with the exception of UPU and WFP which apply a standard rate worldwide for travel within country or pay the equivalent of the cheapest airfare available on the dates of travel for international travel. At IAEA travel by car is discouraged for reasons of safety, even if it is more cost-effective in some cases. However, when it does take place a standard reimbursement rate is used, limited by the applicable air fare. Nestlé also uses a global rate or, if public transport is available and travel is by private car, the allowance paid is equivalent to the cost of the rail ticket plus any other public transport.

48. Indeed, conditions may vary from one organization to other. For instance, at the United Nations and ICAO, travel costs (mileage, tolls, etc.) are reimbursed to only one traveller in a private car, while at FAO and WFP, any additional traveller(s) in the same car receive(s) 20 per cent of the applicable amount. Also at the United Nations and ICAO, the payment of subsistence allowance for travel by official or private car is subject to a minimum distance (at ICAO, 100 per cent for the claimant and 50 per cent for authorized dependants), whereas other organizations have no relevant written rule. Some organizations have however opted for the lump sum approach, as further discussed below.

See Recommendation 8

D. Lump sum option for travel

49. The lump sum option for travel consists of a cash payment made to travellers with which they can make their own travel arrangements. It was introduced in most organizations of the system for certain categories of entitlement travel at the end of the 1980s into the beginning of the 1990s, not without certain controversy at the outset, particularly at the United Nations. However, because of its flexibility and unquestionable advantage in reducing administrative workload, the lump sum approach is today widely accepted and has recently been extended within a number of organizations to almost all existing categories of travel, while others are considering its introduction.

50. The Inspector noted the significant differences in the conditions of application of the lump sum among the organizations of the "common" system. They concerned not only the amount, but also the class, category and mode of travel for which the lump sum is available, and the evidence of completion of travel required, as disclosed in Annex 7.

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[29] ST/IC/2004/29 "Rates of reimbursement for travel by private motor vehicle".

51. The Inspector also observed that although the use of the lump sum option was widely used at the headquarters of the organizations located in North America and Europe, it was used less frequently in the field because of the limited offers available, lack of competition and the thus reduced possibilities of shopping for tickets cheap enough to be fully paid for with the amount of cash received.

Categories of travel for which the lump sum option is available

52. The lump sum option is available for home leave, family visit and education grant travel in all the organizations reviewed, except in WIPO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) where it is restricted to home leave.

53. In recent years, some of the United Nations funds and programmes - UNDP, UNICEF, WFP - and specialized agencies such as FAO, UNIDO, UNESCO and IAEA have introduced the lump sum option for travel on appointment, change of duty station and repatriation. OECD also uses it for these categories of travel. UNIDO and UNESCO further apply it for interview travel and UNIDO also for rest and recuperation travel. One basic difference in the application of the lump sum across the various categories of travel in the organizations mentioned is that at all but UNDP, the lump sum is indeed an ***option*** for which staff members may or not apply, whereas at UNDP it is compulsory and replaces all travel arrangements made by the organization.

Mode of travel

54. Although in general the lump sum option is applied for travel by air, the Inspector noted that it was also available for travel by car in the exercise of the staff member's entitlement to home leave in 7 of the 12 specialized agencies surveyed (FAO, ITU, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WHO and WMO) and at WFP. OECD also applies the lump sum option without regard to the mode of travel used. The lump sum payment in these instances is based on the cost of the travel by air; but the percentage paid for the staff member and any additional authorized dependants travelling with him/her differs in each case. The rationale behind this, as explained to us, was the simplification of procedures. Figures could not be provided on the number of staff using this option nor relative costs/savings, as compared to the mileage system.

The lump sum amount

55. For home leave, family visit and education grant travel, the level of cash paid at the United Nations, and its funds and programmes (with the exception of WFP) is 75 per cent of the full economy fare. This amount is deemed to cover all travel expenses and to waive all other related entitlements such as surface transportation within the country, DSA for stopovers, terminal expenses, accompanied excess baggage and unaccompanied shipment, insurance, visas, etc.

56. The specialized agencies, except ICAO, IAEA, UNESCO, as well as WFP, apply a higher percentage – 80 per cent. This percentage is applied to the full economy fare at ILO, IMO, WHO, ITU and the World Bank; and to the applicable fare (first, business or economy) at ICAO, FAO, WIPO and WFP. WFP, in addition, pays for unaccompanied luggage which may be converted to payment for air accompanied luggage if requested. ICAO, WMO and IAEA follow the 75 per cent rule of the full economy fare, as at the United Nations (except for education grant travel at IAEA which is 65 per cent and WMO which is 60 per cent), and UPU and UNESCO apply 65 and 60 per cent, respectively. At UNIDO, education grant travel is calculated based on 75 per cent of the applicable student fare.

57. For travel on appointment, reassignment and repatriation, the level of cash paid is 100 per cent of the applicable fare at UNDP and UNICEF. Other organizations that have extended the lump sum approach to these categories of travel, apply the same percentage as for travel on home leave, family visit and education travel, i.e. 80 per cent at WFP and 60 per cent at UNESCO. At UNDP, in addition, a universal rate of DSA and a special rate of terminal expenses are paid (see annex 7).

58. The initial controversy around the level of cash paid, particularly at the United Nations, led the various oversight bodies to recommend the re-examination of the rate and consideration of alternatives such as the establishment of a "per zone" rate.[30] OECD is actually applying this concept, the rate ranging between 55 per cent and 75 per cent of the full economy fare according to the country/area. However, when the Inspector enquired about the possibility of introducing the same practice at the United Nations, responsible officials pointed out that because of the numerous home country destinations involved at the United Nations, as opposed to a European organization such as OECD, the determination of a differentiated country/area rate or any other alternative such as the use of International Air Transport Association (IATA) mileages would complicate the administration of the entitlement in such a way as to offset the main advantage of the option, that is to reduce the administrative workload.

59. Further, it is understood that the amount of cash paid should in principle serve as an incentive for the staff to opt for it in order to meet the goal of reducing administrative workload. Since most organizations applying the 75 per cent rate acknowledged that this percentage is adequate, a higher ratio appears to be excessive, particularly when the applicable standard of accommodation is business class and especially when it is added to the lump sum for shipment of personnel effects which is available in some organizations.

60. In the Inspector's view, the correct balance should be sought between the need to encourage use of the lump sum and the need to ensure rational use of resources in order to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the process. It is also imperative to attain a certain level of uniformity in the entitlements of staff across the board and rectify the unfavourable conditions of those staff originating from/serving in countries where it is not possible to finance travel costs with the lump sum amount received, and the resulting adverse impact on the mobility of staff. Consequently, the Inspector estimates that if all organizations of the system were to align to 75 per cent of the full economy fare on home leave, family visit and education travel (which has proved to be successful in terms of cost savings for the organizations applying it and has provided sufficient motivation for the staff to use it), considerable savings could be achieved.

61. On the other hand, for other categories of travel, the responsible officials interviewed were cautious in estimating the cost savings from the use of the lump sum option, since no study has been carried out in this regard. They did, however, underline the unquestionable benefits of streamlining procedures and reducing relative processing transaction costs. One official pointed out that were the "old" system reinstated, additional staff would be needed to cope with the subsequent increase in the workload. The Inspector is of the opinion that the organizations applying the lump sum for other categories of travel should be requested to conduct a cost-benefit analysis and document the advantages of the option and appropriateness of the percentage applied so as to first determine the adequacy of relevant policies and procedures, before recommending its extension to other organizations. The report of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations, Action 25(a), nevertheless

[30] OIOS report "Management Audit of the United Nations Travel" (AM96/49), paras. 47-61; JIU/REP/95/10 "Travel in the United Nations: issues of efficiency and cost savings", paras. 84-92.

recommends "in line with the modalities for other lump sum payments, payment of a lump sum amount for repatriation travel (using 75% of the full economy fare) would be an administrative simplification and beneficial to many staff, and would move towards aligning Secretariat practice with those of the Funds and Programmes." The Inspector fully supports this recommendation.

See Recommendations 2 and 3

Evidence of travel

62. There is an increasing trend not to require evidence of actual completion of travel on lump sum as part of the measures to streamline processes within the organizations of the system. At the United Nations Secretariat and most specialized agencies, proof of travel is still required, but in some funds and programmes (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP) and at FAO, IAEA, UNESCO and UNIDO, travellers are instead requested to fill out a declaration and/or eventually keep the supporting documentation and provide it on demand. Relevant officials reason that the lump sum is an entitlement and as such it is part of the benefits and allowances granted to the staff; these officials/actions favour accountability through self-certification and balance the cost of controls against potential risks of misuse. In this connection, the Inspector noted that the report of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on Strengthening of the United Nations, Action 25(a) recommended that "the Secretariat should consider aligning its policies with those of the Funds and Programmes whereby staff members are responsible for retaining the appropriate documentation, such as travel records for home leave, family visits and other official travels, for a specified period, without being required to substantiate those claims on each occasion."

63. Conversely, not ensuring that resources were used to meet the purposes intended is an abdication of administrative and oversight responsibilities that may give rise to malfunction. Therefore, notwithstanding his support to the streamlining of relevant travel procedures, the Inspector considers that an adequate monitoring and auditing system should be put in place to randomly check selected lump sum-related transactions. FAO currently uses self-certification with random audit, backed by a web-based administrative control tool.

See Recommendation 4

E. Stopovers

64. The stopover rules are very similar in most organizations, except at UPU and the United Nations Secretariat where the relevant policy was changed as a result of an OIOS recommendation to increase the threshold for granting stopovers to 12 and 16 hours, respectively.[31] At WFP one stopover is granted after travel journeys of 10 hours and two stopovers after 18 hours. At FAO, one stopover only is granted after 18 hours. All other organizations (UNICEF, ICAO, ILO, IMO, ITU, UNIDO, UPU, WHO, WIPO and WMO) also authorize a first stopover for travel time exceeding 10 hours and a second one above 16 hours. Alternatively, rest periods of 12 or 24 hours are granted at destination. At IAEA stopovers have in fact been abolished and rest periods are granted as above.

65. Further, contrary to the practice in most organizations, at the United Nations Secretariat and ICAO, stopovers are not authorized on home leave, unless accompanied by children under the age of 12, or on family visit.

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[31] OIOS report; Management Audit of the United Nations Travel (AM96/49), para.29

66. Most officials interviewed indicated that stopovers are infrequently taken and that their financial implications are marginal in terms of the cost of the ticket. Even assuming they are costless – although they are not when all entitlements (DSA and terminal expenses) are included - the reason for stopping to rest after a 10-hour business class trip may become redundant given the purpose for which a higher standard of accommodation has been granted in the first place, particularly because a one-day stop may cause as much disruption as rest, except when it constitutes a "side-trip desired by the traveller" which must somehow be reconciled with the purpose of official travel.[32]

67. In view of the above, the idea of replacing stopovers by additional rest time at destination was entertained by the Inspector in line with a prior JIU recommendation.[33] However, the Inspector disregarded this possibility taking into account that an additional free workday for rest purposes at destination or after the completion of travel can be as costly as a stopover en route, particularly as the latter are infrequently taken, as reported by users. He instead favours the harmonization of the stopover rules in all organizations of the system in line with the policy of the United Nations Secretariat.

See Recommendation 10

F. Daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses

68. The rates of DSA and terminal expenses paid by most organizations of the system are the same, one exception being the application by WFP and ILO of a special terminal expenses rate, not only for New York, but for other destinations such as London, Paris, Rome, Tokyo, Washington and Moscow.

69. Differences were also detected in the procedures for paying such expenses. In the United Nations Secretariat and a few other organizations (ILO, UPU and WHO) only DSA is paid in advance and terminal expenses claimed and settled upon completion of the travel. In many other funds and programmes and specialized agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, ICAO, FAO, WFP, WMO, WIPO, UNESCO, UNIDO, ITU, IMO and the World Bank) both DSA and terminal expenses are advanced in order to simplify processing and reduce transaction costs. The percentage advanced may be 80 per cent, 90 per cent or 100 per cent (see annex 8).

70. The advantage of paying full DSA and terminal expenses in advance is that the travel process becomes more straightforward, involving fewer transactions and less paperwork. The authorizing officers are responsible for certifying that travel is completed as planned and for keeping the necessary evidence for audit purposes, travel claims being prepared/processed only when there is a deviation from the approved itinerary. Since these cases may represent between one third and one half of all travel undertaken, according to the estimations made by relevant officials, the efficiency gains are, therefore, significant. Certain organizations have put in place or are in the process of introducing systems for online processing of travel claims. The additional benefit of these automated systems is that data is directly entered by the traveller and thus self-certified for increased accountability and efficiency. The relevant advances may or may not be recorded as a direct expenditure. In the latter instance, the drawback is that forgetful travellers who later fail to submit travel claims cannot be traced since advances are not recorded as receivables.

71. The Inspector identified as best practice World Bank procedures whereby staff members may either be reimbursed within the established tolerance limits for actual expenditures on hotels,

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[32] idem, para.27

[33] JIU/REP/95/10: Travel in the United Nations: issues of efficiency and cost savings, paras. 140-145

transportation, representation and meals upon declaration, or opt for a lump sum payment for meals, tips and valet services, while evidence is filed and checked on a random basis by an outsourced audit company. At WHO and UNESCO, strict controls are in place and hotel bills are required even for the payment of the lodging portion of DSA.

See Recommendation 9

II. Travel of members of organs and subsidiary organs

72. From 1948, when the first general statement of the principles governing the payment of travel and subsistence expenses to members of organs and subsidiary organs was made by the General Assembly,[34] to date, numerous resolutions have been adopted in this regard. They have established exceptions to the general principle that "neither travel nor subsistence expenditures are paid in respect of members of organs and subsidiary organs who serve as representatives of Governments, unless the resolution establishing the organ or subsidiary organ provides otherwise".[35] These exceptions have created room for vast differences in travel entitlements of members of the various United Nations organs and subsidiary organs.

73. Albeit such differences in travel entitlements in this category of travellers have been a recurrent issue on the agendas of certain United Nations subsidiary and legislative bodies, little progress has been achieved in addressing them. The last time the issue was considered was on the basis of a report prepared by the Secretary-General in 1992[36] and updated in 1993[37] at the request of ACABQ[38] and the General Assembly.[39] The review pointed out the inconsistencies in existing provisions at the United Nations, compared them to relevant provisions in other organizations of the common system, highlighting the differences among them, and made a number of recommendations to address some of the anomalies at the United Nations. However, the General Assembly decided[40] first to defer consideration of the report until it would have before it another report on the travel of staff members of the United Nations and finally took note of it in 1997 without further action.[41]

A. Differences among the organizations of the common system

74. In line with the findings of the above report, the differences, as they stand today, can be summarized as follows (see also annex 9):

- Five organizations (WFP, UNIDO, IMO, ICAO and IAEA) do not pay any travel expenditure of members of legislative organs, except the Chairman at WFP;

- The United Nations and WHO are the only organizations paying travel of members of delegations of the least developed countries (LDCs) participating in the sessions of legislative bodies comprised of the full membership of the organization (the General Assembly and the World Health

[34] General Assembly resolution 231 (III) of 8 October 1948.
[35] A/C.5/47/61of 24 November 1992, para. 11; General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962.
[36] A/C.5/47/61 of 24 November 1992 and Corr.1.
[37] A/C.5/48/14 of 14 October 1993.
[38] A/46/748, para. 9.
[39] General Assembly decision 46/450 of 20 December 1991.
[40] General Assembly decision 47/60 of 23 December 1992.
[41] General Assembly decision 51/465 of 3 April 1997.

Assembly). However, the number of representatives paid is five at the United Nations and one at WHO, and the standard of accommodation provided by the United Nations is first class for one representative and economy or business class when the flight is more than nine hours for the other four representatives, while at WHO it is full fare economy class;

- Most specialized agencies (FAO, ILO, UNESCO, WHO, UPU, ITU and WIPO) pay travel expenses and subsistence to members of legislative bodies composed of a limited number of Member States, generally government representatives. At ILO, the Workers and Employers groups of the Governing Body are paid but not the government members. At ITU, travel expenditures are paid to Council members from least developed nations only. At FAO, Council members are paid travel but not subsistence expenses. At WMO, members of the Executive Council may opt either for the payment of airline ticket at the cheapest available fare, or for the payment of DSA, except for members from LDCs to whom both airline ticket and DSA are paid;

- For government members of legislative bodies, the standards of accommodation are the same at the United Nations, ITU and FAO (nine-hour rule for business class), differing from the standard at ILO (business class above five hours for employers and workers members), and at UNESCO and WIPO (business class irrespective of travel time). Further, the first group of organizations and WIPO apply the same standard to government members as to the staff, whereas a higher standard than the one provided to the staff is valid for members of legislative bodies of ILO and UNESCO. At UPU and WMO, a lower standard, economy class, is paid to members of the Council, except for the Presidents of UPU who travel business class and the President of WMO who travels first class. At WHO, a lower standard is also paid to delegates of LDCs attending the World Health Assembly, but members of the Council benefit from the same standard as staff, i.e., business class above six hours of travel;

- No subsistence allowance is paid to members of delegations (from LDCs) to legislative bodies comprised of the full membership of the organization, as opposed to government representatives and workers and employers, as applicable, of bodies composed of a limited number of Member States. In general, subsistence allowance is paid at the level of Assistant Secretary-General, i.e. the established DSA rate plus 40 per cent, at UNESCO, ILO, ITU and WHO. At UPU and WMO, the standard rate is paid to all members of the Council from LDCs, except for the Presidents of UPU who receive the DSA rate plus 40 per cent. FAO pays DSA to members of the Programme and Finance Committees not based in Rome, but not to members of the Council. Recently, UNESCO discontinued its policy of paying DSA to members of the Executive Board residing in Paris;

- Experts serving in their personal capacity in committees, technical or other panels are generally paid both travel expenses and subsistence. The standard of accommodation can be business or economy class depending on the organization. At the United Nations, for instance, the entitlement is business class irrespective of the duration of travel, whereas at FAO/WFP and ILO it is business or economy depending on the number of hours flown, nine or five, respectively. The subsistence rate is also generally the standard DSA plus 40 per cent.

B. Discrepancies within the United Nations

75. At the United Nations, the differences and inconsistencies in the provisions governing travel entitlements of representatives of Member States participating in sessions of the legislative bodies and

meetings of subsidiary organs and of members of organs and subsidiary organs who serve in their own capacity as set forth in the relevant Secretary-General's Bulletin[42] of 1991 and highlighted in the reports of the Secretary-General of 1992 and 1993 still are:

- Travel expenses of representatives attending the sessions of the General Assembly are limited to five representatives of LDCs and one representative for special sessions. The above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General recommended that the same limitation be imposed to representatives of other subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council participating as representatives of their Governments. No action was taken;

- The standard of accommodation provided to one representative of LDCs attending the regular sessions of the General Assembly is always first class. Permanent representatives of Member States invited to travel on official United Nations business and members of organs and subsidiary organs serving in their personal capacity are entitled to the class immediately below first, irrespective of the duration of the journey. Members of organs or subsidiary organs serving as representatives of Governments as well as the members of the Board of Auditors are provided with the class immediately below first only when the duration of travel is more than nine hours, otherwise they travel in economy class. This issue was not addressed in the Report of the Secretary-General.

- Only members of organs and subsidiary organs serving in their personal capacity or persons appointed by organs and subsidiary organs to undertake special studies or other ad hoc tasks are paid subsistence allowance at the applicable rate plus 40 per cent;

- The class of accommodation granted to members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) is always economy class. The subsistence allowance paid to CPC members is the standard rate plus 15 per cent. All other members of organs and subsidiary organs travel business class and receive the standard DSA rate plus 40 per cent (equivalent to Under-Secretary-General/Assistant Secretary-General). The difference in travel entitlements of CPC members was also noted in the Report of the Secretary-General and four different courses of action proposed, none of which was adopted.

See Recommendation 12

[42] ST/SGB/107/Rev.6 of 25 March 1991.

Annex 1

Organizations surveyed

United Nations

1. United Nations Secretariat, Programmes and Funds (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP)

Specialized agencies

2. FAO
3. ICAO
4. ILO
5. IMO
6. ITU
7. UNESCO
8. UNIDO
9. UPU
10. WHO
11. WIPO
12. WMO
13. World Bank

Related organizations

14. IAEA

Other

15. OECD

Private sector

16. IBM Switzerland
17. Nestlé Switzerland

Annex 2

Categories of travel

	UN	UNDP	UNFPA	UNHCR	WFP	UNICEF	FAO	ICAO	ILO	IMO	ITU	UNESCO	UNIDO	UPU	WHO	WIPO	WMO	IAEA	World Bank	OECD
Mission travel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Travel on appointment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Travel on change of duty station	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Separation travel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Home leave Travel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Family visit travel	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Education travel	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reverse education travel	X	X			X							X			X					X
Medical evacuation travel	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X			X	X	
Security evacuation travel	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X			X	X	
Rest and recuperation travel	X	X		X	X	X	X	X					X	X						
Travel of breastfeeding mothers	X				X	X	X								X					
Travel of single parents						X														X
Domestic partner travel	X*							X	X											

* In certain circumstances only (see ST/SGB/2004/13 of 24 September 2004)

Annex 3
Chronology of events
(United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination Administrative Handbook)

1945-1960: The standard for official business travel by air was first class.

1961: With the introduction of jet flights, the United Nations adopted economy class for all travel of officials below P-5 on flights of nine hours or less.[43] Some organizations followed with variances.

1966: Noting such divergences, ACC recommended, and the General Assembly approved, that the appropriate standard in the United Nations common system should be first class for all staff at or above D-2 level, except that on flights of short duration, within Europe, and comparable flights elsewhere, economy class should be used wherever feasible.

1973: The General Assembly decided that first class accommodation should be restricted to Assistant Secretaries-General and above, with authority granted for exceptions to the Secretary-General. ACC agreed that this standard should be applicable throughout the common system.[44]

1977: Having considered a JIU report on first class travel in the United Nations organizations, the General Assembly decided[45] that those staff members previously entitled to first-class travel (Under-Secretaries-General/Assistant Secretaries-General) would henceforth be so entitled only when the duration of the flight exceeded nine hours.

1982: After the introduction of business class by many airlines, CCAQ agreed that the class immediately below first (business class) could be authorized for journeys (or a leg of a trip) of a duration equal to that of crossing the North Atlantic.[46]

1989-1990: A meeting of the Medical Directors of the United Nations system recommended that for health reasons all air travel of five hours or more should be in business class.[47] This recommendation, together with a UNDP request for greater harmonization of practices, opened new discussions in CCAQ. Noting the differences between travel standards of the organizations and the difficulty in reducing them,[48] CCAQ first reiterated, with the United Nations and WMO reserving their positions, its 1982 recommendation that business class could be authorized in specific circumstances,[49] and further, at the request of ACC, reconsidered the issue to restate through a strong consensus, except for WMO, that economy class was not an appropriate mode of travel on official business. The preparation of a report providing statistical and other data, including practices outside the United Nations system was requested.[50]

1991: ACABQ called for a review to "encompass all questions related to the travel of staff and representatives of Member States, including entitlements to first-class travel, with a view to formulating recommendations for a system which can be administered with flexibility and which eliminates existing anomalies", taking into account "practices elsewhere in the United Nations system with a view to achieving uniformity and consistency"[51]. The General Assembly requested[52] the Secretary-General to submit at its forty-seventh session, a "review/evaluation of the current system" together with specific proposals.

1992: The Secretary-General recalled[53] that CCAQ had considered the issue and had requested the preparation of a compendium on current practices within the United Nations system, suggesting to postpone the submission of

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[43] CO-ORDINATION/R.325, paras.72-76.
[44] CO-ORDINATION/R.1045, para.66.
[45] A/32/272.
[46] ACC/1982/5, paras.96-101.
[47] A/C.5/51/35, para. 12.
[48] ACC/1990/5, para. 44.
[49] ACC/1990/4, paras. 130-135.
[50] ACC/1990/10, paras. 71-77.
[51] A/46/748.
[52] 46/450 of 20 December 1991.
[53] A.C.5/47/61 of 24 November 1992.

recommendations relating to travel of staff members to the next session of the General Assembly while awaiting the results of the study and the compilation of data on cost estimates and financial implications.

1994: The report was submitted,[54] based on questionnaires sent out to 16 specialized agencies and organizations within the system, 15 intergovernmental organizations outside the system and each permanent mission. All but one of the specialized/intergovernmental agencies and 30 per cent of the permanent missions responded. The consolidation of the responses of Member States and intergovernmental organizations proved extremely difficult because of the difference in rank and grade of travellers, and the terminology used, the lack of clarity and diversity for approval of exceptions. The Secretary-General considered in concluding this report "[w]hile the data on organizations of the United Nations system would appear to provide some justification for an improvement in the standards of accommodation for air travel applicable within the United Nations, there does not seem to be a sufficiently strong case for such a recommendation at this time, particularly since the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) is also seized with the matter of arriving at a system-wide common standard of accommodation. Furthermore, given the problems inherent in the comparison of travel provisions of Member States with those of the United Nations, it would be difficult to make any recommendation for a revision in the current travel provisions of the Organization on this basis. Accordingly, the Secretary-General does not wish, at this juncture, to recommend any revision of the current standards of accommodation for air travel of staff members of the United Nations". It was also noted that "according to article 11 (b) of the Statute of the International Civil Service Commission, "the Commission shall establish ... rates of allowances and benefits, other than pensions and those referred to in article 10 (c), the conditions of entitlements thereto and standards of travel". Though the Commission has never conducted a substantive review of this subject under its authority, the General Assembly might wish to refer the question of standards of travel of staff members of the United Nations common system to the International Civil Service Commission for further consideration".

Among other issues of relevance to the present JIU report, the study concluded that:[55]

- "...the standards applicable to staff members of the United Nations tend to be lower than those accorded to officials of comparable rank in other organizations within the United Nations system. This is particularly the case with regard to the standards of accommodation provided to staff members at the D-2 level and below. United Nations staff members at these levels are authorized to travel at a standard of accommodation lower than that accorded to similar staff in 11 out of 15 other organizations surveyed. The remaining four organizations apply standards of accommodation equivalent to those of the United Nations. The level of accommodation for air travel for this category of staff is the lowest standard within the United Nations system";

- "A comparison of the standards of accommodation accorded to officials at the higher levels by the organizations of the United Nations system shows similar results for the United Nations. Ten of the organizations surveyed provide their higher-level officials with standards of accommodation superior to those given to similar officials in the United Nations. Three organizations provide standards of accommodation similar to the United Nations and two organizations provide a standard marginally lower than that of the United Nations";

- "...Member States tend to accord a higher standard of accommodation to their officials at the higher levels than the United Nations. Middle-level officials tend to have a similar standard and officials at a lower level tend to travel at a standard of accommodation lower than that prevailing within the United Nations system or in other international organizations. The Secretariat also noted a prevalent practice by national airlines of Member States to upgrade officials of their countries routinely to a higher class of service than that authorized by the official standards of accommodation";

- The related financial implications of "decreasing or increasing the determination point for higher class of service" were considered to be "minimal (less than 5 per cent for an increase or a decrease by one hour, less than 10 per cent for an increase or decrease by four hours)",[56]

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[54] A/C.5/48/83 of 29 July 1994
[55] A/C.5/48/83, paras. 28-30
[56] A/C.5/48/83, para. 32

- "...Even if economy class were the prevailing standard for all flights, an analysis of the travel patterns of United Nations travellers shows that their itineraries would only allow a minimal use of discounted economy airfares which are a prerequisite for significant savings. Most official travel consists of multi-leg itineraries to a variety of destinations. The airfares for such trips are constructed based on the combination of one-way full economy-class fares, which are only marginally less costly than business-class fares. Under the current standards of accommodation, a significant amount of United Nations travel to destinations where simple round-trip tickets can be utilized already falls into the category of the least costly airfare structure (such as transatlantic travel). The United Nations is normally able to utilize excursion and advanced-purchase airfares at discounts of over 50 per cent below the price of regular full-fare economy-class tickets for such trips. Another large group of United Nations travellers consists of staff members assigned to United Nations peace-keeping or political missions in the field. Most of these assignments have a duration of six months or longer. Since the actual return dates of the concerned staff members is not usually known in advance, and most discounted airfares have a maximum validity of three months, the majority of travellers on mission assignments are provided with one-way tickets. Discounted airfares are generally not available for one-way travel. The resulting price difference between the two classes of service is minimal".[57]

1995: ACABQ requested that the nine-hours threshold be reviewed by the Secretary-General "in the light of all relevant factors" and report the results of the review, together with proposals, in the next report on standards of travel.[58] JIU proposed that the General Assembly consider the possibility of raising the threshold to business class 10 hours[59] to put "all European duty stations on the same footing". The Secretary-General in his report[60] considers that the nine-hours threshold "achieves an optimal balance between savings to the Organization and efficiency considerations, bearing on mind that air travel is an official function and not a matter of choice, that a large amount of travel takes place over weekends and at night and much to destinations where strenuous conditions prevail and noticing the decline in recent years of the quality of economy class service (higher load, tighter seating and noisy environment) making it difficult for passengers to rest or work and diminishing ability to perform afterwards. The Secretary-general recommended that given the desirability of harmonizing travel standards throughout the system, ICSC review the issue and make recommendations.

1997: The General Assembly[61] called ICSC to undertake a review, at the earliest opportunity, taking into account the relevant reports of ACABQ and the Joint Inspection Unit[62], on the question of travel entitlements of staff of the United Nations common system and to report thereon to the Assembly at the second part of its resumed fifty-first session. ICSC submitted its considerations together with its Annual Report for the year 1997[63]. It reported that given the scope and complexity of the issues involved, it would require more time for the study. It added that bearing in mind the diverse mandates and requirements of the organizations, it would not be desirable or feasible to impose a uniform approach on them. It considered that the overall issue of travel policy, including some flexibility in standards of travel should be left to the legislative/governing bodies of the individual organizations. Nevertheless, the Commission thought it appropriate to provide some broad guidance on certain issues for the sake of greater uniformity, among them, the reasonableness of considering an upgrade from economy to business class for flights of six hours or more. The General Assembly took note of the observations of the Commission[64] and invited ICSC "to continue its consideration of this matter".

1998: CCAQ requested ICSC to delay consideration of this matter until such time as the necessary research had been carried out[65].

1999 to date - No other research has been carried out.

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[57] A/C.5/48/83, paras. 33-34.
[58] A/49/952 of 4 August 1995, para. 3.
[59] JUI/REP/95/10 , recommendation 7(2)(a), paras. 127–135.
[60] A/C.5/51/35 of 27 November 1996, para. 14-15.
[61] General Assembly decision 51/465 of 3 April 1997.
[62] A/49/952, JIU/REP/95/10.
[63] A/52/30.
[64] General Assembly resolution 52/216 of 22 December 1997.
[65] ACC/1998/5 of 11 June 1998.

Annex 4

Standards of accommodation for air travel undertaken by United Nations system senior staff (equivalent of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General)

Standard of accommodation*	Organization(s) to which it applies	
	No.	Name
First class irrespective of the duration of the flight	2	WIPO & WMO (SG)
First class if flight exceeds 7 hours, for all travel except home leave, otherwise business class	1	IAEA
First class if flight exceeds 9 hours, otherwise business class	1	WMO (DSG & ASG)
First class for official business travel, otherwise economy class	1	IMO
Business class irrespective of duration of travel	8	United Nations and Funds and Programmes, FAO, ITU, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU and World Bank
Business class for all travel if duration of travel exceeds 5 hours, otherwise economy class	1	ILO
Business class if flight exceeds 7 hours, for all travel except home leave, otherwise economy class (ICAO)	1	ICAO
Business class on duty travel if duration of travel exceeds 6 hours, otherwise economy class	1	WHO

ASG: Assistant Secretary-General
DSG: Deputy Secretary-General
SG: Secretary-General

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* Education travel of dependants is always economy class

Note: There is no first class travel within Europe.

Annex 5

Standards of accommodation for air travel undertaken by United Nations system staff at D-2 level and below

Standard of accommodation	Organization(s) to which it applies	
	No.	Name
Business class regardless of duration of flight for all travel	1	WIPO
Business class regardless of duration of flight for all travel except home leave	1	World Bank
Business class for official business travel, otherwise economy class	1	IMO
Business class if travel time exceeds 5 hours, otherwise economy class	1	ILO
Business class on duty travel of 6 hours or more, otherwise economy class	1	WHO
Business class if travel time exceeds 7 hours for official business travel, travel on appointment, change of duty station and separation, otherwise economy class	2	IAEA, ICAO
Class immediately below first (business class) for travel on mission of 8 hours or more and for journeys between Paris and New York, otherwise economy class	1	UNESCO
Business class on official business travel of more than nine hours or involving crossing the North Atlantic, and when departure is after 22:00 local time and staff member works prior to departure and on day of arrival	1	WMO
Class immediately below first on all flights above nine hours (except education travel), otherwise economy class least costly airfare structure	2	FAO*, WFP
Least costly airfare structure, except for flights of 9 hours of more, in which case class immediately below first applies for official business travel, travel on appointment, change of duty station and separation	4	United Nations and Funds and Programmes, UNIDO, UPU, ITU

* Rome – New York considered more than nine hours

Annex 6

Summary of exceptions to the applicable standard of accommodation granted at the United Nations

Reasons for exceptions	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total/Average
Medical condition	9	16	7	17	19	68
Regular standard not available	10	14	13	8	13	58
Eminent persons	9	21	10	20	22	82
Donating services free of charge	9	4	10	7	9	39
Arduous journeys	2	4	7	1	6	20
Personal aides/security officers	13	15	13	11	11	63
Deputy Secretary-General	3	6	10	2	5	26
President of the General Assembly			8	1	4	13
Total	**55**	**80**	**78**	**67**	**89**	**369/73**

Reasons for exceptions	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		Total/Average	
	FC	BC	FC	BC	FC	BC	FC	BC	FC	BC	FC	BC
Medical condition	1	8	14	2	5	2	5	12	4	15	29	39
Regular standard not available	4	6	7	9	7	6	3	5	5	8	26	34
Eminent persons	0	9	10	11	2	8	8	12	9	13	29	53
Donating services free of charge	3	6	1	3	2	8	7	0	7	2	20	19
Arduous journeys	0	2	3	1	0	7	0	1	1	5	4	16
Personal aides/security officers	13	0	15	0	13	0	11	0	11	0	63	0
Deputy Secretary-General	3	0	6	0	10	0	2	0	5	0	26	0
President of the General Assembly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	0	1	0	4	0	13	0
Total	**24**	**31**	**56**	**26**	**47**	**31**	**37**	**30**	**46**	**43**	**210/42**	**161/32**

Source: A/54/382, A/55/488, A/56/426, A/57/485

FC: First class
BC: Business class
n/a: not applicable

Annex 7
Lump sum option for travel

Organization	Category of travel for which option is available	Percentage applied	Evidence of travel required
United Nations UPU ICAO	Home leave Family visit Education	75% of full economy fare	Yes
UNDP UNICEF UNIDO UNFPA	Home leave Family visit Education	75% of full economy fare (at UNIDO, 75% of applicable student fare for education travel)	No. Only Declaration signed by traveller
	Appointment, Reassignment Home leave in connection with reassignment Repatriation on Separation Interview and Rest and recuperation (UNIDO only)	100% of authorized class plus. Universal rate of DSA for stopovers, special rate of terminal expenses, and excess baggage for hardship duty stations (not at UNICEF and UNIDO).	Country office to inform date of arrival/departure
WFP	Home leave Family visit Education Appointment Change of duty station Repatriation	80% of applicable fare, business or economy. In addition, 25kg of unaccompanied baggage or 10Kg of accompanied baggage paid, on request.	No. Declaration signed by traveller. Tickets required if stopover taken. Country offices to inform date of departure/arrival
FAO	Home leave Family visit Education Appointment Change of duty station Separation	80% of applicable fare.	No. Only Declaration signed by traveller.
WIPO	Home leave	80% of applicable fare, first or business.	Yes
ILO	Home leave Family visit Education	80% of full economy fare, 65% for scholastic travel	Yes
IMO	Home leave Education	80% of full economy fare	Yes
WHO, ITU	Home leave	80% of full economy fare 100 % of train ticket to final destination (ITU). 10% for children of up to 9 months and 50% for children between 9 months and 12 years (WHO)	Yes
UNESCO	Home leave Family visit Education Appointment Change of duty station Repatriation Interview	60% of full economy fare for adults, 30% for children between 2 and 12 years old and 6% for children below 2 years.	No. Only Declaration signed by traveller.
WMO	Home leave Family visit Education	75% of full economy fare 60% for education travel.	Yes.
IAEA	Home leave Family visit Education Appointment Change of duty station Repatriation	75% of full economy fare for adults, 50% of adult entitlement for children between 2 and 12 10% of adult entitlement for children below 2 years 65% for education travel	Certification by staff member. All necessary evidence to be kept by traveller for 5 years for possible audit.

Annex 8

Advances of daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses

	Daily Subsistence Allowance	Terminal expenses
	(Percentage)	
United Nations	100%	None
UNDP/UNFPA	100%	100%
UNICEF	80%	80%
WFP	100% *	100%*
ILO	80%	None
FAO	100%	100%
UNESCO	80%	80%
WHO	80%	None
World Bank	100%	100%
ICAO	90%	90%
IMO	90%	90%
ITU	100%	100%
UPU	80%	None
WMO	100%	100%
WIPO	100%	100%
UNIDO	100%	100%
IAEA	100%	100%

* For point-to-point travel with fixed dates only, otherwise 80 per cent DSA paid in advance

Annex 9
Travel of the representatives of the Member States and members of organs and subsidiary organs

Organization	Organ	Travel paid	Standard of accommodation	Subsistence allowance
United Nations	Sessions of the General Assembly	Limited to the representatives of LDCs - five representatives to the regular sessions of the General Assembly - one representative to special and emergency sessions	- one first class and four economy (or business for flights nine hours or more) - one economy (or business class for flights nine hours or more)	No DSA
	Members of the functional organs of the Economic and Social Council	One representative per Member State	- economy (or business for flights nine hours or more)	No DSA
	Members of organs and subsidiary organs serving in their personal capacity	Yes	- business class irrespective of distance (members of CPC are entitled to economy)	DSA + 40% For CPC members DSA + 15%
ILO	General Conference	No		
	Governing Body (56 members - 28 Governments, 14 workers, 14 employees)	Employers and workers	- business class for flights of five hours or more	DSA + 40%
FAO	Conference	No		
	Council	One representative per Member State (on request)	- economy (or business for flights of nine hours or more)	No DSA Terminal expenses only
UNESCO	General Conference	No		
	Executive Board (EXB) (58 members)	Yes	- business class - President of the Board – first class	DSA + 40% plus US$ 5
UNIDO	General Conference	No		
	Industrial Development Board (IDB) (53 members)	No		
ICAO	Assembly	No		
	Council (36 members)	No		
WHO	Assembly	LDCs (one representative per delegation)	- economy	No DSA
	Executive Board (EB) (52 members)	Yes	- economy (or business for flights of six hours or more)	DSA

Organization	Organ	Travel paid	Standard of accommodation	Subsistence allowance
UPU	Universal Postal Congress	No		
	Council of Administration (CA) (41 members)	Yes	- economy plus first class train ticket to Bern	No DSA
	Postal Operations Council (POC) (40 members)	Only delegations of Member States considered to be disadvantaged (3)	- economy plus first class train ticket to Bern	No DSA
ITU	Plenipotentiary Conference	No		
	Council (16 members)	LDCs (one representative per delegation)	- economy (or business for flights of nine hours or more)	DSA + 40% plus US$ 3
	Radio Regulations Board (12 members)	Yes	- economy (or business for flights of nine hours or more)	DSA + 40% plus US$ 3
WMO	Congress			
	Executive Council (EC) (37 members)	Yes (on request)	- economy - President of WMO, first class	DSA standard rate DSA + 40% plus US$ 7
IMO	Assembly	No		
	Council (40 members)	No		
WIPO	Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO	One representative per State member of PCT & Madrid Union Assemblies	- business class	
IAEA	General Conference	No		
	Board of Governors (BG) (35 members)	No		

United Nations A/60/79

General Assembly

Distr.: General

19 May 2005
Original: English

Sixtieth session
Items 54, 58 and 66 of the preliminary list*

Sustainable development

Eradication of poverty and other development issues

Advancement of women

Identical letters dated 18 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to inform you of the establishment of a trust fund for non-governmental organizations to assist them in strengthening their capacities to eradicate poverty, ameliorate the livelihood of poor families and communities and reinforce the role of women in sustainable development. The genesis of this initiative was the Doha Conference for Non-Governmental Organizations, held in Doha, Qatar, from 4 to 6 March 2002. Consequently, to carry out this vision, her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser al-Missnad, Consort of His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar, established the above-mentioned trust fund, which provides opportunities for non-governmental organizations to buttress their pivotal roles in development activities.

I would be grateful if you would circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, for information purposes, under items 54, 58 and 66 of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Nassir Abdulaziz **Al-Nasser**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

05-35104 (E) 240505

Annex to the identical letters dated 18 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly

[Original: Arabic]

Trust fund for non-governmental organizations working in the field of development

The vision

Desiring to ensure a brighter future for nations, individuals, families and societies, strengthen the contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to economic and social development and overcome the obstacles that hinder development activities throughout the world, several public figures, organizations and representatives of States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) have developed a common vision on the occasion of the Doha Conference for Non-Governmental Organizations, held in March 2002 on the topic of the complementary role of non-governmental, governmental and international organizations in sustainable development.

The purpose of this Conference, held at the initiative of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), a key element of OIC, and of the Social Development Center, an essential part of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, was to highlight the existing complementarities among non-governmental, governmental and international organizations in providing assistance to the poorest sectors of society and to find ways of strengthening NGO efforts to improve the living conditions of poor people. The Conference made several recommendations, one of which concerns the establishment of a trust fund to support NGOs working in the field of development and their programmes in the area of women's empowerment.

The concept

The Fund was established at the initiative of Her Highness, Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al-Missnad, wife of His Highness, the Emir of Qatar. She spoke at the opening session of the Conference on the complementary role of non-governmental, governmental and international organizations in sustainable development and stressed the importance of a comprehensive strategy for combating poverty and strengthening NGO institutions so that they can play a leading role in the fields of development and economics, thereby benefiting societies and individuals.

The participants recommended the establishment of this fund. On that occasion, Her Highness, Sheikha Moza bint Nasser al-Missnad, made the first contribution in the amount of one million Qatar riyals.

The competent committee, which comprises representatives of the Social Development Center and IDB, then commenced follow-up to and implementation of these recommendations and took decisions concerning the creation, composition and functioning of the Fund.

The committee decided that advocacy for the Fund would be conducted between March 2005 and March 2006 and that the Fund's establishment would be officially announced at the Founders' Assembly, to be held on 20 and 21 March 2006.

The Fund's objectives

- To finance NGO-developed projects aimed at poverty alleviation and improvement in the living conditions of poor rural and urban dwellers;
- To provide support and capacity-building for NGOs and women's groups; and
- To strengthen the role of NGOs and women's groups in efforts to publicize projects financed by the Fund and in the implementation of those projects.

The Fund's resources

- The Fund's resources are provided by IDB and through grants and donations from governments, the private sector, organizations, businesses and individuals.
- All payments made in reimbursement of sums allocated from the Fund's resources and income from investment of its capital are added to its resources.

The Fund's administration

- The Fund is administered by IDB through its Donors' Council and Board of Executive Directors and the President of that Board.

Composition of the Donors' Council

The Donors' Council is composed of members, including IDB, which make individual or group donations to the Fund in amounts not less than one million United States dollars.

Initial capital

The initial capital, as of the establishment of the Fund, was set at 51 million dollars.

Awareness-raising activities during the period May 2005 to May 2006

Activities aimed at increasing awareness of the Fund began in March 2005 and involved many participants, including individuals, bodies and organizations working at the local, regional and international levels. These activities will continue until March 2006 and will culminate in an announcement of the Fund's establishment at the Donors' Assembly, to be held in Doha on 20 and 21 March 2006.

Constitutive Assembly of the Fund for non-governmental organizations working in the field of development

The Assembly's objectives

- To officially announce the Fund's establishment and to publicize its objectives;
- To attract founders of and contributors to the Fund; and

– To publicize the role of NGOs and promote a culture of support for their activities through donations.

Date of the Assembly

20 and 21 March 2006

Participation

Donors and founders, including individuals and organizations; international and regional organizations; and representatives of the primary NGOs working in the field of social action for development are invited to participate in the Assembly.

United Nations A/60/80

General Assembly

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Sixtieth session
Item 63 of the preliminary list*
Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

Follow-up to the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/146 on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. The report provides an overview of the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, which took place during the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development. It reflects the deliberations held during the high-level segment of the Commission and highlights the uneven progress made in achieving the goals and targets adopted at the Summit, suggesting that the strengthening of implementation at all levels and in all areas continues to be essential. The report ends with a number of conclusions emanating from the 10-year review conducted by the Commission.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

05-35432 (E) 140605

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/146 of 20 December 2004, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the Assembly. The report is the eleventh in a series on this subject since the holding of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, and the first report after the holding of the 10-year review of the Summit in February 2005.

2. In the context of the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2004/58, decided that the forty-third session of the Commission should convene high-level plenary meetings on the 10-year review of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action[1] and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. The Council also requested that the Commission transmit its outcome entitled "Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development", through the Council to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, including to the high-level event of the Assembly on the review of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) in 2005.

3. This report provides a summary of the deliberations held by the Commission on the 10-year review of the Summit and ends with several conclusions emanating therefrom.

II. Recapitulation of the high-level plenary segment of the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development

4. The tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development was observed during the first part of the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development, which was held from 9 to 18 February 2005. On 9 February, two high-level panel discussions were held on the 10-year review. The first panel consisted of representatives of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The second panel comprised the executive secretaries of the regional commissions: the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

5. Also in the context of the 10-year review of the World Summit for Social Development, there was a presentation of the outcome of the fourth International Forum for Social Development entitled "Equity, inequality and interdependence". In addition, a civil society forum entitled "Reclaiming Copenhagen" was held immediately prior to the forty-third session of the Commission. The outcome of the forum was also presented to the members of the Commission during its plenary session.

6. Following the opening of the high-level plenary meeting on 10 February, the Commission continued with three simultaneous high-level round tables, held in the

framework of the 10-year review, on the three core issues addressed by the World Summit for Social Development: eradicating poverty, promoting full employment and fostering social integration. The purpose of the round tables was to review what had been achieved since the Summit in 1995, to identify further constraints and challenges in those key areas and to forge an implementation strategy. Linkages to the implementation of the 10 commitments adopted by the Summit and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals were also examined.

7. The high-level plenary meeting to review progress in implementing the commitments made at Copenhagen resumed its session in the afternoon of 10 February. Following the round tables, some 80 speakers took the floor, including 31 ministers and another 26 Government representatives from capitals, as well as representatives from United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and non-governmental organizations. Speakers acknowledged that progress over the past decade had been largely uneven and that concerted and far-reaching efforts were needed to create a society for all and to reinforce the inclusive vision as called for by the World Summit for Social Development. There was wide recognition of the need to mitigate the negative effects of globalization and to address the unfavourable trade relationships that marginalized some populations, exacerbated income inequalities between countries and hindered the ability of developing countries to mobilize resources and advance social development.

8. Speakers during the two-day high-level segment encouraged countries to meet and to strengthen their pledges of official development assistance (ODA), noting that a common characteristic of poor countries was the servicing of the principal and interest on their external debt. Innovative proposals mentioned for financing social development included the creation of a tax on international transactions, a scheme for an international finance facility to improve the coordination and transparency of aid flows and programmes of exchange of debt relief for social development initiatives.

9. Speakers also called attention to the changing dynamics of the global labour market and the lack of an international strategy for employment and migration. Noting that human mobility was a central theme of globalization, a number of countries expressed the need for increased dialogue and cooperation to ensure that the rights and social dimensions affecting migrants were taken into account.

10. Speakers underlined the need for the United Nations to continue to support regional and subregional initiatives on social and economic development, and in that connection noted that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should be given priority attention as a partner in development. Several speakers also mentioned that the commonly used definition of poverty as living on less than one dollar a day was too limited and that researchers and policymakers should explore better ways of measuring poverty that went beyond this quantitative value. Furthermore, when designing new initiatives, it was necessary to view poor people not as passive recipients of aid but as active players who possess the ability to improve their economic status within institutional and legal environments.

III. Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development

11. The Commission adopted a final outcome document entitled "Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development",[2] which will be transmitted to the high-level plenary meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly in September 2005, through the Economic and Social Council, as a contribution to the 5-year review of the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration reaffirmed, inter alia, that the commitments in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action constituted the basic framework for the promotion of social development for all at the national and international levels, and that the need for continued implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session were crucial to a coherent, people-centred approach to development. More significantly, it recognized that the implementation of the Copenhagen commitments and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals were mutually reinforcing.

12. The Declaration further reaffirms that enhanced international cooperation and action at the national level are essential to the implementation of Copenhagen. To this end it underlines the importance of adopting effective measures that include new financial mechanisms to support the efforts of developing countries to achieve sustained economic growth, sustainable development, poverty eradication and strengthening of their democratic systems. Member countries renewed their commitment to support national efforts to promote a favourable environment for social and economic development, including the provision of technical and financial assistance through regional and other initiatives such as NEPAD.

13. In the context of the three core issues of the Summit, the Declaration reaffirmed, inter alia, that policies and programmes designed to achieve poverty alleviation should incorporate specific measures to foster social integration, including by providing marginalized socio-economic sectors and groups with equal access to opportunities, that an employment strategy with full respect for basic principles under conditions of equity, equality, security and dignity should constitute a fundamental component of development strategies, and that the social impact and dimension of globalization deserved further attention. The declaration further recommitted countries to promote social integration by fostering societies that were safe and just based on the promotion of all human rights and reaffirmed the importance of promoting the goals of universal and equitable access.

14. The Declaration recommits Governments to one of the basic tenets of the Copenhagen Declaration: that people must be at the centre of development efforts. It will be recalled that the Programme of Action adopted by the Summit sought to accomplish this by emphasizing the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative. It acknowledged that policies to eradicate poverty must work in parallel: on the one hand to increase opportunities and access to resources and on the other to reduce inequalities in the distribution of assets, wealth, opportunities, income and services. Also, the 117 heads of State at Copenhagen recognized an unequivocal link among poverty, unemployment and social disintegration and between security and the rising gap between rich and poor, and warned that if society wanted to reduce social tensions and create greater social and economic stability and security, then it must address inequalities within and among countries and invest in social development.

IV. Summary of substantive discussions, including those in the high-level panels and round tables, on the 10-year review of the World Summit for Social Development

A. Overview

15. This section highlights the points made in the round tables and panel discussions by the high-level representatives of Member States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and participants from civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, who participated in the forty-third session of the Commission on the 10-year review. It also takes into consideration the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission for Social Development on the review of further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (E/CN.5/2005/6) as a contribution on that subject, as well as the compilation of materials sent from United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to the Secretariat for its deliberations.[3]

16. It was pointed out that a number of trends had been adversely affecting social development since the convening of the World Summit for Social Development a decade ago. Also, the broad concept of social development affirmed by all world leaders in Copenhagen has gradually become less comprehensive and has even been severely weakened in global policymaking. While poverty is front and centre in development policy and discourse, the other two core issues of the Summit — employment and social integration — have suffered from a general disconnect between economic and social policymaking. It was noted that the centrality of employment and the fundamental contribution of social integration to economic and social development were absent in the Millennium Development Goals and that the injection of those missing links into the Goals, particularly within the context of poverty eradication, was needed to shore up efforts to build more inclusive, just and stable societies.

17. Although the Summit laid the groundwork for the Goals, the effort since then to prioritize action by focusing on the Goals has resulted in the narrowing of the international development agenda. The Commission for Social Development, in trying to counter this trend, has sought to highlight the broader social development picture first portrayed in Copenhagen.

B. Enabling environment

18. It will be recalled that the World Summit for Social Development recognized that the link between and integration of economic and social policies was imperative to building a conducive environment for social development and that international cooperation had a major role to play in supporting national social development efforts, especially in Africa and the least developed countries. The review by the Commission for Social Development reveals that a number of factors continued to impede the ability to create an enabling environment, including natural and man-made disasters, such as armed conflict, earthquakes, floods, droughts and HIV/AIDS. National and global governance and policy frameworks can either

promote or hinder social development, depending on the quality of governance and the policies formulated within such frameworks.

19. Policymaking that is consistent with social development goals also needs a decision-making system that incorporates the principles of participation and transparency and consideration for equity and equality. Democratization and the increasingly important role of civil society organizations as partners for social development, despite the decline in the role of trade unions, helps to promote transparency and accountability. However, even under a democratic system, social development goals, which often reflect the concerns of the marginalized in society, are at risk of being downgraded to a position of lesser priority because of the voice and participation of those most affected are inadequate.

20. The dominant perspective on development at the time of the Summit focused on the virtues of the market in guiding the course of development. In the decade since, economic globalization has expanded dramatically, while social and political institutions have remained largely national, not providing needed oversight of global markets to redress inequalities among countries. Globalization in its current form has been partly blamed for the widening gap between rich and poor countries, as measured by the inequality of average incomes across countries. The asymmetries of globalization and lack of public oversight have contributed to a situation in which the costs and benefits of globalization are not equitably shared among countries and peoples.

21. A deteriorating security situation can have detrimental consequences for development. Insecurity can lead to increased military spending and result in shrinking opportunities, as investors and donors abandon unstable areas and local social and economic activities are curtailed. Given that the world has surpassed the $1 trillion mark in global defence spending, obstacles to reallocating defence spending are all the more challenging to overcome, as are efforts to address ways to reduce armed conflict and violence.

22. How social development is financed, especially in poorer countries, is central to achieving the objective of improving social conditions, as highlighted at Copenhagen. Moreover, failure to deal with the importance of the social dimension of development can foil efforts at sustainable development. Inspired in large part by the goals of the Copenhagen Declaration, the World Bank, for example, has become more sensitive to the social dimensions of development. Particular progress has been made in according greater recognition to the need to embed social policy within economic policy as a way of fostering overall development. In addition, IMF is attempting to work with its partners to ensure that the social dimensions of development are addressed at the macroeconomic level, which has led it to focus on poverty reduction strategies and how macroeconomic policies affect social development.

23. The debates of the Commission reaffirmed that adequate financial resources were a prerequisite for social development, although the provision of resources itself did not automatically lead to social development. Both the Copenhagen Declaration and the further initiatives adopted at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly called for increasing current levels of ODA as soon as possible, thereby increasing the flow of resources available for social development. However, despite a modest rise in aid from an all-time low of 0.22 per cent, ODA

remains far below what it was during the 1980s and early 1990s, even though all donor countries became richer during 2004.[4]

C. Poverty

24. Even though Governments have given greater priority to poverty since the World Summit for Social Development by setting poverty reduction targets and enacting poverty eradication plans, progress has been uneven and the global scenario overshadows sharp regional and national differences. The decisive influence of China and India's economic growth on the overall levels of economic expansion has had a huge impact on global poverty levels. However, in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America poverty reduction has been stagnant, and in Western Asia poverty has actually increased. Although a lack of sustained growth has been a major obstacle to reducing poverty, it is important to ensure that the benefits of growth are redistributed for sectors such as education and health.

25. There is wide consensus that coordinated global and national action is needed in the fight against poverty and that in order to formulate effective poverty eradication strategies, the root causes of poverty have to be recognized and understood. Among these wide-ranging causes are unequal distribution of income and assets, insecurity and vulnerability, and social exclusion and powerlessness.

26. The persistence of inequalities in income, assets and opportunities exacerbates poverty, and high unemployment rates and lack of access to resources, such as land, credit, markets and information, further limit the productive capacity of poor people. In addition, lack of access to basic services, such as education and health care, limits the opportunities available to poor people, while social exclusion and lack of a voice prevent poor people from fully participating in decisions that affect their lives. Weak social protection, exacerbated by long-term civil conflict and the breakdown of the rule of law, magnifies the vulnerability and insecurity of poor people. Empowering the disadvantaged, especially women, who constitute the bulk of those who are poor, should be at the centre of a comprehensive approach to poverty.

27. The point emerged from the review that at the international level, poverty existed in both developed and developing countries. Thus, the global commitment to eradicating poverty should be on a sustained basis and not just in response to financial emergencies or national calamities. This commitment can take the form of debt relief, innovative partnerships between regions and countries, including consultations with the private sector, and the sharing of information and best practices for poverty eradication.

28. Considerations of equity and equality are far from being incorporated into national strategies in such vital areas as promoting agriculture and sustainable rural development; improving access to education, health care, social protection and other social services; targeting the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; and promoting employment opportunities. Integrating these elements into and strengthening the relationship between macroeconomic policies and social development goals are key elements of national poverty reduction strategies.

D. Employment

29. The review points to the fact that progress in expanding employment has fallen far short of expectations and that the past years have seen a rise in global unemployment levels. Where job growth has taken place, it has been concentrated in insecure, informal employment with low wages and few benefits.

30. The issue of the centrality of employment to poverty reduction has been lacking from international policy discussions, with the exception of the inclusion of youth employment in the Millennium Development Goals. Promoting full and productive employment is a prerequisite for better and more equally distributed income, growth and development, and expanding access to quality jobs is essential for achieving peace, stability and social cohesion. The application of macroeconomic policies, without measuring their social impacts, has led to increased poverty and unemployment and even to the risk of social disintegration of many societies. As with social development, macroeconomic policies should incorporate employment creation as a key objective.

31. Globalization and international trade are closely linked to the employment situation in developing countries, with protectionist trade policies potentially leading to job losses, particularly in agriculture, and the actions of transnational corporations possibly compromising local labour standards. Shifts in the patterns of production and trade, as in the case of outsourcing, are creating new winners and losers: 80 per cent of the global population has no access to social protection.

32. It was mentioned, however, that despite some recent negative trends, globalization can be a positive force for the creation of decent work. The goal of full employment is possible, but only if all relevant actors take responsibility for full employment. The high level of unemployment among young people is of particular concern. In this regard, the establishment of the Youth Employment Network and its recommendations for addressing this situation are recognized.

33. In some cases, significant progress has been made in terms of employment creation despite the imposition of punitive and discriminatory policies. Debt-servicing obligations undermine the ability of many developing countries to finance investment in human capital and infrastructure, thereby affecting economic growth and the generation of employment. In this context, it is considered vital to re-examine ODA so that it is directed at employment promotion and to rectify the imbalance between taxation levels for labour and capital at the national level.

34. Within the context of a global employment agenda, ILO has developed a decent work agenda that emphasizes employment, rights at the workplace, social protection and social dialogue. It has also put more emphasis on ensuring that employment and decent work goals are incorporated in both the formal and informal sectors and in poverty reduction strategies. An important contribution of ILO was the establishment of an independent World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, whose 2004 report highlights the potential of globalization to improve social welfare and the ways in which Governments, business, labour, parliamentarians, civil society and the international community can all work towards promoting a more inclusive globalization.

35. The effects of international migration on labour markets and the growing recognition of international migration is a central issue on the global agenda.

highlighting the need for global, regional and bilateral frameworks. The brain drain from developing countries that has resulted from the free movement of skilled labour while the movement of unskilled labour remains restricted has led to increased inequality between countries and regions. There is concern that the increased flow of remittances, although a valuable source of income for many developing countries, may become a justification for donors to withdraw or limit aid to developing countries.

E. Social integration

36. The World Summit for Social Development viewed failures of social integration to include social fragmentation; widening disparities and inequalities; and strains on individuals, families, communities and institutions as a result of the rapid pace of social change, economic transformation, migration and major dislocation of populations, particularly in areas of armed conflict.

37. The debate at the Commission for Social Development pointed out that progress in implementing the Copenhagen Declaration in social integration has lost ground. Social integration has not been fully integrated into the general discourse outside social development circles, which underscores the erosion of the principle of solidarity among peoples, societies and nations. The rift between efforts to achieve the aims of the Millennium Development Goals and those of the broader commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development is apparent, making it more difficult to focus on a people-centred approach. Although globalization can yield advantages and encourage social development, the differing pace of globalization across countries has brought about greater social exclusion.

38. In many countries, groups with special needs are marginalized in the political process. Persons with disabilities, among others, require special focus. Their integration requires legal instruments to protect them from discrimination and to ensure their rights and equal opportunities in society. Similar protections are required for immigrants, refugees and displaced persons. The needs of ageing populations are of growing concern. For example, if changes are not made in current systems for the financing of pensions and long-term care, future generations of older persons may be left without adequate social protection. Despite the fact that the family is facing tremendous pressures and is undergoing significant changes, it is essential for facilitating social inclusion.

39. Fostering social integration requires tools to empower individuals, including through education, by providing people with the skills to participate in society and to engage in productive employment. The education of girls is particularly important as it yields the highest return on investment in developing countries. Investment in health is also vital for social integration; public health policy can directly influence social development, combat poverty and reduce social exclusion.

40. The role of civil society is vital in promoting a people-centred approach. By working locally, civil society organizations are able to ensure that those who need support have access to it. In addition to civil society, Governments and the private sector all need mechanisms, networks and institutions through which to build consensus and improve collaboration.

F. Status at the regional level

41. The panel discussion with the executive secretaries of the regional commissions on regional perspectives on the implementation of the World Summit on Social Development focused primarily on the core issues of poverty, employment and social integration. Mixed progress was reported by all of the commissions, and many of the same constraints facing the regions that were present at the time the Summit took place continue to prevail. In areas where global indicators have improved, the progress made and the pace of change vary widely between regions, and even more so within countries. Rising levels of income inequality within and among countries threaten the possibility of lifting people out of poverty, promoting employment and fostering social integration.

42. The executive secretaries also elaborated on their plans to implement gender mainstreaming policies, to address growing demographic imbalances and to improve coordination between the regional commissions and actors in civil society. The issue of violence and youth was also raised, as was the question of how best to face the challenge of gathering reliable data.

Africa

43. In sub-Saharan Africa, poverty has continued to rise and over one third of the population is undernourished. There has been a net addition of more than 63 million people to the ranks of the poor. Unemployment on the continent is extremely high and underemployment is rampant, affecting 40 per cent of the labour force. Some progress is evident in the area of social integration, which has been attributed to the growth of democracy and some improvement in governance throughout the region. While conflict continues to be a major disruptive factor, the African Union has made important achievements in conflict resolution and progress in the areas of civil society organization and gender equality.

44. Prevailing challenges include low growth, persistent poverty and weak governance, the social and economic disruption resulting from conflict and shortfalls in health and educational services. Inadequate financial resources and weak human and institutional capacity add further constraints to these challenges. Finally, NEPAD will continue to play an instrumental role in providing a framework to address these challenges and allow Africans to take ownership of the development process.

Europe

45. Less-advanced and emerging market economies in Europe are facing major challenges. Since the reforms of the late 1980s, less-advanced economies have been facing massive poverty and increasing inequality. The issues of quality and access to health care are inadequately addressed, and, coupled with a decrease in life expectancy, the decline in fertility rates and the rapid spread of infectious diseases, those major challenges remain.

46. Key trends in emerging market economies include high and increasing unemployment and low employment rates. Disparities in income are growing quickly within some countries, and urban/rural and regional inequalities in per capita gross domestic product are widening. Education, social and pension reforms

have led to the deterioration of the immediate social situation of the majority of the population.

Latin America and the Caribbean

47. Since the World Summit for Sustainable Development, the Latin American and the Caribbean region has experienced an overall lack of social progress. While poverty rates have decreased slightly in recent years, the total number of poor people has risen substantially. Since 1990, urban unemployment and informal employment have increased, and the number of those employed in the formal economy has been decreasing. Workers without social protection now comprise the vast majority of the urban labour force.

48. Furthermore, the persistence of income concentration and employment constraints threatens social integration by segmenting society and reducing social protection and the participation of the poor in the development process. Disruptive processes, such as risky and violent behaviour among youth, have emerged as obstacles in the labour market and as difficulties in achieving growth of social mobility.

49. On a positive note, Governments have increased the levels of public social expenditure, which has contributed somewhat to alleviating the special needs of poor people and vulnerable groups. Similarly, significant progress has been made in the implementation of policies aimed at reversing discrimination against women and against indigenous and Afro-descendant groups, but sharp disparities still prevail.

Asia and the Pacific

50. Efforts to eliminate poverty in the Asian and Pacific region have produced mixed results. While some areas have reported progress, there is a need to transform national poverty reduction strategies into effective policies in areas where the situation has deteriorated.

51. Unemployment rates for females are higher than those for males, and youth unemployment is greater than that of adults. Furthermore, the region is home to 70 per cent of the illiterate population of the world (600 million persons), 65 per cent of whom are women.

52. There has been improvement in the area of social integration, specifically in the formulation of comprehensive social development programmes and the revision of laws vis-à-vis vulnerable groups. In addition, institutional arrangements for social development are being established with time-specific targets to ensure cost efficiency and maximum impact.

53. The recent Indian Ocean tsunami brought great devastation in human and economic terms to the region. A framework of action is under way that includes the development of an early warning system, the building of infrastructure to reduce vulnerabilities and the expansion of financial assistance.

Western Asia

54. Efforts to create an enabling environment for social development in the region include governance and democracy projects and numerous community development undertakings. Progress has been made in poverty alleviation and in the preparation

of technical studies on the measurement, characteristics and determinants of poverty, as well as the development of policy tools necessary for poverty reduction.

55. With a view to achieving full employment, technical studies have been conducted on the effects of globalization, the creation of employment opportunities among the rural population and the promotion of new technologies. In the area of social integration, activities aimed at improving the situation of vulnerable groups have included implementing field projects, preparing studies and organizing seminars and training workshops to strengthen community self-reliance. In addition to encouraging policymakers and donors to increase resources allotted for social development, studies have been prepared to improve access to education and primary health care.

56. It is felt that national, regional and international efforts must be interlinked to achieve social development goals in the region. At the international level, political, financial and technical support are a prerequisite to overcoming challenges; promoting an environment free of war and instability is necessary to facilitate such support.

V. Conclusions

57. Based on the foregoing, the following points emerged from the high-level segment of the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. They are presented to the General Assembly in the framework of strengthening social development and giving due consideration to a people-centred approach in the context of the five-year review of the Millennium Declaration.

58. **A people-centred approach to development requires integrating economic and social policies, notably integrating social development goals into macroeconomic policies at the national and global levels; better management of the economic and social consequences of the interdependence of nations in a globalizing world; and a new approach to relations between the public and the private spheres and the role of the State in formulating and carrying out economic and social policies.**

59. **Macroeconomic policies should enable Governments to counter the negative impacts of globalization on social development. This entails adopting monetary and fiscal policies that seek to expand employment and reduce poverty and focusing on long-term development rather than short-term allocative efficiency. Economic growth by itself is not sufficient, and high growth rates alone will not guarantee significant poverty reduction.**

60. **Poverty reduction policies should attack poverty by addressing its root causes and manifestations and incorporate equity and equality measures in those policies. Addressing the root causes of poverty requires the collective efforts of Governments, international organizations, civil society and other partners, with voluntarism and social mobilization serving as powerful partners in the fight against poverty. Specific policy measures should guarantee access by the marginalized to assets and opportunities — particularly to education, land, capital and technology. Policies should also expand international and bilateral cooperation, including the transfer of technology and the sharing of experiences and good practices; promote good governance**

and the rule of law; and take into account the gender dimension of poverty, particularly the feminization of poverty, when formulating strategies.

61. **Employment policies should promote decent work under conditions of equity, security and dignity, and incorporate job creation into macroeconomic policy. Greater attention must be given to the informal economy as it does not provide social protection and may deepen gender inequalities. Thus, specific measures should incorporate the informal sector in social protection programmes and promote job creation by directing investment to productive and labour-intensive sectors, in addition to encouraging small- and medium-sized enterprises. Given the level of job mobility and dislocation inherent in today's dynamic labour market, active labour market policies are essential to fostering the smooth reallocation of labour from declining industries to new and emerging ones.**

62. **Social integration policies should seek to reduce inequalities, to promote access to education and health care and to increase the participation and integration of older persons, youth, migrants, indigenous persons and persons with disabilities. They should counter the negative effects of globalization on social development and the new threats posed by market-driven reforms, as they appear to produce social exclusion. The private sector should be encouraged to make investments in social sectors and provide civil society organizations with support to carry out programmes. Moreover, such programmes should widen public participation in decision-making by ensuring access of information to citizens and establishing mechanisms for reviewing Government policies. The collection of statistics to better identify the most vulnerable groups should also be strengthened.**

63. **Efforts should be intensified to help countries achieve social development goals through the provision of resources — both technical and financial — and to eliminate the debilitating debt burden in order to allow countries to redirect their scarce resources to social expenditures.**

64. **Advancing global initiatives that strengthen policy coherence, both nationally and internationally, is crucial. At the international level, high-level inter-ministerial coordinating committees could be established to implement strategic plans and actions in areas crucial to social development, such as employment creation and social integration.**

Notes

[1] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] See *Economic and Social Council, Official Records, 2005, Supplement No. 6* (E/2005/26), chap. I, sect. A.

[3] ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, ILO, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

[4] See Development Initiatives, "Briefing on aid in 2004" (www.devit.org/dgagfigs2004brief2.pdf).